

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION



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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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FRONT COVER: Long-eared Owls flushed from dense cover sometimes pause on exposed perches. Photo by Paul Hertzfel.

DESIGN: Lynn Ekblad, Ames, Iowa

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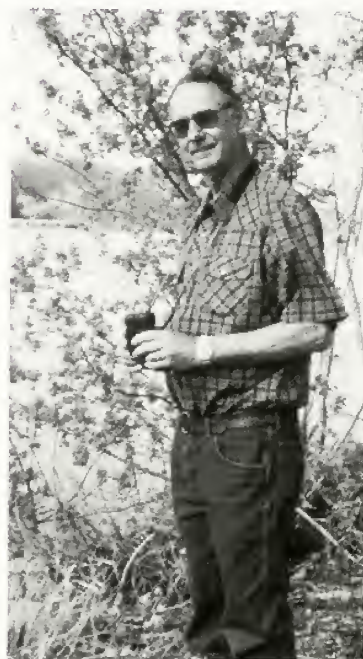
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## Meet an Iowa Birder — Bob Nickolson

*Robert I. Cecil*

*You won't even get to the front door of Bob Nickolson's Sioux City home before you realize he has a love for birds. Bird feeders, wildlife plantings, and ornaments adorn his yard, and that's just the beginning. Inside, the decor is lavish with bird art, bird paintings, bird books, and even bird tiles set into family room and bathroom walls. Bob and his wife Phyllis have had a long time to collect it, having lived here for all 43 years of their marriage. Although membership records are incomplete, Bob may have the longest continuous membership in the Iowa Ornithologists' Union (IOU).*



*Robert L. Nickolson*

Robert L. Nickolson was born in Clark, South Dakota on 2 December 1932 and moved with his family to Sioux City in 1938. During his childhood, his interests turned to nature, especially birds. His love of nature was fostered during high school when he became acquainted with Zell Lee, then president of the Sioux City Bird Club. She not only encouraged his birding, but also his participation in the Sioux City Bird Club, which he joined in 1947, and the IOU, which he joined in 1949. Armed with his 2nd edition of Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds*, Bob, who drove, began birding with Zell, who didn't drive. In his early years, Bob also became acquainted with some of Iowa's best known birders and ornithologists from the Sioux City area. With Bill Felton who had a collecting permit, he assisted in the collection of bird specimens that were provided to the University of South Dakota. He was acquainted with Ira Gabrielson, a contributor to *Wilson Bulletin* and *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*. He knew Dr. T. C. Stephens, professor of



biology at Morningside College in Sioux City and editor of the *Wilson Bulletin* for 14 years, as well as being the author of *An Annotated Bibliography of Iowa Ornithology* and a number of birding articles. He also knew the enigmatic William Youngworth, a major contributor to *Iowa Bird Life* and to Bent's *Life Histories of North American Birds*.

Bob's early birding was interrupted by education and military service. Following his high school graduation from Central High School in Sioux City in 1951, he served with the U.S. Army Occupational Force in Germany from 1953 to 1955. He then returned to Sioux City and earned his B.S. in Business Administration from Morningside College in 1957. In 1958, he married his sweetheart and future birding partner Phyllis Alberding who, with him, also became very active in the Sioux City Bird Club. They have two children: a daughter Claudia who is working on her Ph.D. in language literacy at Pennsylvania State University and teaches at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado, and a son Brian who works in residential and commercial development out of Geneseo, Illinois. Following his college graduation, Bob joined his father as a cattle buyer in Sioux City.

After completing his military service and returning to Sioux City, Bob again became active in birding. On the local level, he was an organizer or participant in several annual events of the Sioux City Bird Club, most notably the annual Beaver Dinner ("dark meat — tastes like pork," Bob adds) and the annual Spring Duck and Goose Trip where all ducks and geese were tallied. "This was before Blue Geese and Snow Geese were recognized as color phases of the same species," he notes, so both kinds were individually tabulated. He also compiled the Sioux City Christmas Bird Count for 30 years; served as president, vice-president, and board member of the Sioux City Bird Club; and served as field trip chair almost continuously. Reports on these activities, along with his field reports and letters, were published in *The Dickcissel*, the official publication of the Sioux City Bird Club. On the state level, Bob served as IOU president in 1968 and 1969 and on the Executive Council for 17 years, from 1960 to 1977.

Consolidation of the cattle industry caused him to leave that profession in 1979 and to take a position with the Sioux City school system as the groundskeeper for Roberts Stadium. Bob points out that the worst part of the job was that the football and track schedules for the Sioux City schools and Morningside College required him to work weekends, preventing him from attending IOU meetings.

Bob's long history of active birding combined with his vivid memory reveal much about the changes in Iowa birding. Unfortunately, many of these changes involve habitat destruction and declines in bird numbers and species diversity. He recalls the 1950s and 1960s when the birding was "so much better" than it is now, adding that the steady increase in CBC species' counts is probably attributable to better birders than to better birding. He also recalls how Orchard Orioles, Western Kingbirds, and Bell's Vireos could be found in his back yard, but are now difficult to find anywhere in the area. Living in Sioux City during construction of the major dams along the Missouri River in South Dakota, he has seen how they have reduced flooding, but only with great loss of habitat.



*Robert L. Nicholson*

For many people, interests come and go. For Bob and Phyllis, they have remained steadfastly committed to birding (although they do manage to combine it with fishing trips to Canada, Nebraska, and South Dakota). They frequently visit their favorite birding spots around Sioux City including Bacon Creek City Park, Brown's Lake Woods, the Loess Hills Nature Conservancy prairie area, the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, Adams Nature Preserve in nearby South Dakota, and Stone State Park where Bob has done much volunteer work. And, of course, during their almost daily 3-mile walk on hiking trails along the Missouri River, they always take their binoculars. They even are active home birders, with three bird baths and 43 years of continuous bird feeding. They also make two or three trips per year to see the endangered Piping Plovers and Least Terns near Niobrara, Nebraska. The constant birding has paid off, with Bob counting among his best finds a Black-necked Stilt at Snyder's Bend and the Lazuli Bunting seen by many at the tri-state ornithologists meeting at Sioux City in May of 1997.

Now that Bob is retired, he and Phyllis fully intend to again begin regular attendance at IOU meetings. Watch for him, and then say hello. He can talk to you about the old lions of Iowa birding when they were just cubs, the IOU during its much earlier years, and the transformations of Iowa birding, both good and bad. He's easy to spot — tall, and in the kind of physical and mental shape I hope I'll be in when I hit 69 years old.

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# **A Comparison between Fall and Wintering Long-eared Owl Roost Sites in Cerro Gordo County**

*Paul Hertzel and Rita Goranson*

## **ABSTRACT**

*We conducted an informal but systematic survey of the presence of the Long-eared Owls in Cerro Gordo County during the fall and winter of 2000–2001. By identifying all or nearly all suitable habitat and repeatedly visiting that habitat throughout the fall and winter, we were able to detect owls at a higher rate than is usually reported for the county. We found that migrant owls in the fall passed through expected habitat with no apparent preferences, but no Long-eared Owls remained to winter on tracts that were hunted for deer.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) is classified Regular in Iowa (Kent 1998). It occurs year-round, but based on seasonal field reports published in *Iowa Bird Life*, encounters are usually with migrants and wintering birds between late October and early April. Kent and Dinsmore (1996) summarized this history in *Birds In Iowa* and noted that birders have learned some favorite haunts resulting in wintering owls being reliably found at a few familiar locations year after year.

Summer encounters are increasingly rare. Kent and Dinsmore (1996) list nesting records for 10 of 99 Iowa counties, although it has been thirteen years since the last summer report — a 1988 Clarke County nesting (Dinsmore 1988). In the species account for the *Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas* (Jackson et al. 1996), the authors expressed the belief that some owls may have been overlooked during the atlas project (1985–1990) due to the difficulty of detecting this elusive species.

The Long-eared Owl is secretive and strictly nocturnal, but its habits can be predicted. Those occurring in Iowa are found most

often in evergreen habitat. Jackson and colleagues (1996) described the preferred roost environment of wintering birds as conifer groves adjacent to grassy areas. Favorite roost habitat also has been characterized as "medium-sized bushy conifers" (Silcock 1990). This same profile for winter roost habitat enabled 47 Long-eared Owls to be found in nearby southern Minnesota during the winters of 1998–1999 and 1999–2000 (Hertzel and Hertzel 2000). The lack of any significant understory was another factor common to most roost sites in the Minnesota project.

Cerro Gordo County in north-central Iowa has not contributed significantly to the historical record of the Long-eared Owl in the state. The seasonal influx of owls has been detected irregularly by birders with about one bird every two or three years. In the fifteen years, 1985–1999, there were four reports of single birds submitted to the editors of the *Iowa Bird Life* season field reports. In three additional years, birds were found but reports were not submitted (Goranson and Nelson 2000).

#### CERRO GORDO COUNTY TOPOGRAPHY

An apparent lack of suitable habitat might in part explain the few Long-eared Owls reported from Cerro Gordo County. Data from the 1990 U.S. Census (U.S. Department of Commerce 1990) indicate 78% of the land is in use by approximately 800 farms. Prior to settlement, most of the county was prairie. The general shape of the land has been described as a "uniformly undulating surface" (Cerro Gordo County 1971). The county is relatively flat, having been glaciated three times during the Pleistocene Epoch leaving behind thin layers of glacial till and outwash deposits (Hershey et al. 1970). "The small total area of more rolling land occurs only in narrow strips adjacent to the larger streams" (Cerro Gordo County 1971). Those two streams are the Winnebago and Shellrock Rivers, which have thin, fragmented greenbelts. Other natural habitats left by the glaciers are Clear Lake, now nearly surrounded by development and used heavily daily as a playground for sports enthusiasts and recreational boaters, and a handful of small wetlands, most notably the Union Hills complex of prairie potholes.

The preferred habitat for the Long-eared Owl is scarce in the county, occurring primarily as windbreaks and small, isolated pine plantations installed for reasons other than to attract the owls. It is not likely that habitat for Long-eared Owls will improve soon. The Comprehensive Plan (Cerro Gordo County 1971, 18) explains, "The



primary concern in future land use is that the better and most productive land and soils be reserved for the agricultural activity." Furthermore, lands assessed to be less than the "better and most productive land" are increasingly cleared and put to the same use. Most of the acreage that is added to farms consists of former wetlands that have been drained and small timbered areas that have been cleared (DeWitt 1981). Further habitat loss occurs as Mason City and Clear Lake slowly grow toward each other. Nevertheless, a few secretive Long-eared Owls have been able to make use of the county in the past, at least the reported seven in the past fifteen years.

## METHODS

In the year preceding the fall of 2000, we surveyed the county to identify areas that seemed suitable for roosting Long-eared Owls. We sought areas with three characteristics — predominantly evergreen habitat, relatively open understory/adjacent ground, and hunting fields nearby. We identified 16 areas ranging from about one-half hectare to about three hectares (see Appendix A).

Seven of these areas were public tracts that did not require permission for use in the survey, and nine areas were privately owned. For each of the latter, we obtained consent from the owners to search the tracts for owls in the fall and the winter. We noted for each of the sixteen tracts whether or not they were used for hunting.

All but one area received an initial visit prior to the expected arrival of migrant owls to inventory and remove any prior evidence of owls. Only one site had any such evidence, a single roost with three aging Long-eared Owl pellets probably from the spring of 2000 or earlier. We identified Long-eared Owl pellets by their shape and size, which is variable, but is approximately thumb-sized with a slick, dark gray appearance. A few Long-eared Owl pellets are shorter and more blunt than the typical pellet and often a roost will contain examples of both forms. See Peasley (1944) for a photograph of Long-eared Owl pellets presumably collected in Iowa. Repeatedly used roosts also will have a build-up of whitewash on the tree branches and trunk, especially noticeable if the roost is recent.

We counted a site as having been used during the season by Long-eared Owls if (1) we encountered Long-eared Owls at the site (11 instances) or (2) we discovered recent Long-eared Owl pellets on top of fresh snow or litter with no owls present (two instances). Each time owls were discovered, we noted the tree type and approximate height and we approximated the height of the roost.

After 30 November and during the first few weeks of December we suspended our search for Long-eared Owls. We did not want to be on hunted tracts during the most active part of deer hunting season — the shotgun season. We resumed the search on 16 December on a nonhunted tract.

## RESULTS

In the fall of 2000, we discovered 10 Long-eared Owl roosts distributed over nine of the 16 tracts. The earliest encounter was a single Long-eared Owl seen on 25 October, after which we continued to find owls until the end of the fall season on 30 November. Table 1 lists each fall encounter, the size of the tract, type and size of tree chosen for roosting, and roost height.

At six tracts we did not discover any evidence of Long-eared Owl use during the fall, in spite of visiting and searching these tracts 18 times during the period. Three of these tracts having no owls are located adjacent to the noisy Interstate Highway 35 (I-35), but otherwise appear to have ideal habitat. At one tract (G) we failed to make a fall visit.

**Table 1. Fall 2000 Cerro Gordo County Long-eared Owl occurrences**

Date	Tract	Size (hectare)	Owls	Tree	Tree height (meter)	Roost height (meter)
24 Oct	I	1	1	Red pine	8.25	4.5
12 Nov	N	1.5	3 pellets	White pine	7.75	—
13 Nov	K	2.5	1	Red pine	7.75	4.5
16 Nov	H	3	1	Red pine	7.75	4.5
18 Nov	B	1	1	Scotch pine	6.75	5
18 Nov	B	1	1	Juniper	6	3.75
20 Nov	C	1.5	1	White pine	11	6
26 Nov	D	1	1	Scotch pine	6	?
27 Nov	M	2	1	White pine	5	2.5
30 Nov	O	2	2 pellets	White pine	6.75	—

After suspending searches for most of the shotgun deer season, we resumed the project in what, by then, was the winter season. Over the next month, we discovered four Long-eared Owls at three roost sites. Table 2 lists these encounters. At 13 sites we found no evidence of wintering Long-eared Owls, including at seven sites that had birds in the fall.

**Table 2. Winter 2000–2001 Cerro Gordo County Long-eared Owl occurrences**

Date	Tract	Size (hectare)	Owls	Tree	Tree height (meter)	Roost height (meter)
16 Dec	D	1	1	Scotch pine	6	?
13 Jan	B	1	1	Red pine	7.75	5
17 Jan	G	1	2	White pine	14	6

During both seasons, we found use by Long-eared Owls at 11 of the 16 sites identified before the start of the project. At five sites, which included three sites adjacent to I-35, we found no evidence of Long-eared Owls in either season.

Each tract was identified as hunted or not hunted. During fall prior to shotgun deer season (2–6 Dec and 9–17 Dec), we found owls in six tracts that were eventually hunted as well as in three tracts that were not hunted. Following the hunting season, we found no Long-eared Owls in tracts that were hunted, but we found four owls at three sites in which hunting was not allowed. Table 3 shows these data.

**Table 3. Relationship between tract ownership and use and seasonal owl use**

Tract	Ownership of land	Hunted	Fall owls	Winter owls
B	Nature preserve	No	2	1
D	Private property	No	1	1
G	Nature preserve	No	—	2

**Table 3, Continued**

Tract	Ownership of land	Hunted	Fall owls	Winter owls
O	Private property	No	Roost	0
E	Public land	No	0	0
A	Private property	Yes	0	0
C	Public land	Yes	1	0
F	Private property	Yes	0	0
H	Private property	Yes	1	0
I	Private property	Yes	1	0
J	Public land	Yes	0	0
K	Private property	Yes	1	0
L	Private property	Yes	0	0
M	Private property	Yes	1	0
N	Public land	Yes	Roost	0
P	Public land	Yes	0	0

## DISCUSSION

Our success rate at identifying habitat was 69%, that is, Long-eared Owls occurred in 11 of 16 tracts. Owls most often roosted in white or red pines, between half and two-thirds the distance from the ground to the tree top. Specifically, the mean roost height was 58% of tree height (number [n] = 9, standard deviation [ $\sigma$ ], with a mean height of 4.7 meters (m) ( $\sigma$  = 1.1 m). Most of the roost trees were of intermediate height (6 to 8 m). Only once did we find Long-eared Owls in very tall pines — a stand of mature white pines about 14 m high in the Shellrock Greenbelt Preserve.

In 1990, Ross Silcock, winter Field Reports Editor for *Iowa Bird Life*, wrote "It appears that this species can be found whenever looked for in medium-sized bushy conifers anywhere in Iowa." Our fall data seem to corroborate this assessment for migrant birds in a county with minimal habitat and an irregular report history. By targeting likely roost areas, obtaining permission, and repeatedly visiting these areas throughout the period, we were able to locate at least eight birds between 25 October and 30 November in Cerro Gordo County. This can be compared to an average of one Long-eared Owl report for this county every two years for the previous ten-year period.

We had less success in the winter season, finding only half as many owls as in the fall and on exclusively on nonhunted tracts. Of the nine tracts having owls in the fall, birds persisted at only two of



these during the winter. It is not known what causes the Long-eared Owls to disperse long distances in the fall. In some European populations, irregularities in food supply apparently prompt nomadism (Marks et al. 1994). The same responses have not been clearly documented in this hemisphere, where some birds commonly winter in the breeding range and others migrate long distances. Owls banded in the northern United States and in Canada have been recovered as far away as Mexico (Houston 1997; Marks et al. 1994), but about 50% of recoveries occur in the same geographic region where banded (Marks et al. 1994). We made no effort to determine food source or supply.

Coincidental with the approximate end of migration, however, were two other factors possibly affecting the seasonal difference in numbers of Long-eared Owls. First, in Iowa, the first of two short shotgun deer seasons began on 2 December 2000. The fact that no owls remained on hunted tracts may indicate that shotgun deer hunting, in particular, is an intolerable disturbance to the birds on such small tracts. Second, the weather in December 2000 abruptly deteriorated. The month of December was the second coldest in 128 years of record keeping and had the most snow in 114 years (Cecil 2001). State-wide reports of Long-eared Owls for the season were down from the immediate past. There were reports from only seven Iowa counties, compared with 12 counties in 1999 and 13 counties in 1998.

In eleven encounters with Long-eared Owls, ten were with lone birds and one was with two birds. We never found more than three pellets at the base of a roost. This suggests little site fidelity among Cerro Gordo County Long-eared Owls. By comparison, single communal roosts have been found in Iowa with as many as 450 pellets under the roost (Morrissey 1951). Those Long-eared Owls staying the winter

chose nonhunted sites, but exhibited some tolerance for other sorts of human disturbance. Neither of the winter roosts discovered at nature preserves were especially secluded, both being located adjacent to trails that had steady winter use from hikers, skiers, and even snowmobilers. In addition, we flushed these individuals several times. It is curious that Long-eared Owls prompted to fly from dense cover sometimes will perch in the open (Figure 1).



Long-eared Owls flushed from dense cover sometimes pause on exposed perches. Photo by Paul Hertzell.

Within the sixteen survey tracts, we encountered evidence of four species of owls besides the Long-eared Owl including thirteen Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*), one Eastern Screech-Owl (*Otus asio*), three Northern Saw-whet Owls (*Aegolius acadicus*), and one Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) ground roost containing seven pellets. We found Long-eared Owls using a stand of trees simultaneously with Great Horned Owls twice and with Northern Saw-whet Owls once.

#### SUMMARY

Although Cerro Gordo County appears to have minimal habitat for Long-eared Owls, we were able to detect a few migrants using tracts with small to medium-sized evergreens in the fall. Even tracts as small as one hectare were used. In 2000–2001, most fall owls moved elsewhere for the winter months. Further studies may help answer questions regarding the relationship between fall migrants and wintering populations. We would be interested to know to what degree factors such as tract size, weather, and human disturbance (particularly hunting) might affect these birds.

The strictly nocturnal Long-eared Owl's secretive nature and preference for dense evergreen habitat probably contribute to its low detection rate by birders. In Cerro Gordo County, we had the best luck in the last two weeks of November in tracts of intermediate-sized red or white pines that were not near busy highways.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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#### APPENDIX A. SHORT DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH TRACT

Tract	Size (hectare)	Description
A	2	Private, hunted. Neat regular plantation of intermediate-sized pines, adjacent to I-35.
B	1	Public nature preserve, not hunted. Long, L-shaped plantation of juniper and red pine.
C	1.5	Public, hunted. The main line of trees is six rows of white, red, and Scotch pines and a few eastern red cedars. A secondary line is juniper with white pines. A third section consists of taller, mature pines.

APPENDIX A., continued

Tract	Size (hectare)	Description
D	1	Private, not hunted. A small plantation of about 10 rows of mixed Scotch and white pines.
E	1.5	Public, not hunted. Several small, but distinct sections of mixed evergreens in narrow but regular rows, immediately adjacent to I-35.
F	0.5	Private, hunted. A small plantation of red/white pines stand in regular rows with a few surrounding junipers.
G	1	Public nature preserve, no hunting. Four long rows of extremely tall, mature white pines.
H	3	Private, hunted. Extensive plantation of Austrian, white, red, and Scotch pines originally planted as a Christmas tree farm.
I	1	Private, hunted. Semi-open, mixed pines: White, red, and Scotch pines with a few junipers at the fringe.
J	0.5	Public, hunted. One long row of white pines flanked by other evergreens.
K	2.5	Private, hunted. Two regular arrays of mixed red and white pines.
L	0.5	Private, hunted. A loose, open stand of junipers with a few longer needle pines.
M	2	Private, hunted. A widespread array of predominantly white pines.
N	1.5	Public, hunted. Three close but separate acreages of pines with encroaching deciduous brush. Three deer stands constructed in trees.
O	2	Private, no hunting. Two perpendicular rows of pines, primarily white, red, and Scotch pines.
P	1	Public, hunted. Three distinct clumps of moderate-to-tall, primarily white pines, near I-35.



# Field Reports — Summer 2001

*James J. Dinsmore*



*J. J. Dinsmore*

## WEATHER

June started out fairly cool and wet with much rain. After mid-June, rainfall decreased markedly and many parts of the state experienced almost drought-like conditions. Temperatures also became warmer with frequent daytime highs in 80s or 90s and even a few 100-degree days. July was a continuation of the second half of June with warm temperatures and relatively little rainfall. In particular, the latter half of July was hot with frequent highs in the 90s.

## HABITAT CONDITIONS

Wet weather in late May and early June left many fields flooded, providing good habitat for late shorebird migrants. Those fields dried out by mid-June and other than drying wetlands, there was little shorebird habitat in July. Despite the dry conditions, most wetlands held water fairly well and provided good habitat for most breeding wetland species. Although there was no significant flooding of low lying areas and relatively few severe storms, a strong hail storm in the Spirit Lake area in early June apparently took a severe toll on wildlife. Many Canada Geese and songbirds were killed in the storm, and it also apparently caused the failure of Iowa's first Osprey nest.

## UNUSUAL SPECIES

Some of the better finds included a Pacific Loon, Red-necked Grebe, American Black Duck, Bufflehead, Hudsonian Godwit, Laughing Gull, Burrowing Owl, Short-eared Owl, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Lawrence's Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Red Crossbill. Other good finds were a large flock of Willets, a Black-and-white Warbler in northeastern Iowa, a Blue Grosbeak in north-central Iowa, and two Red Crossbills. The reports of at least 10 Common Loons makes one wonder how many actually summer in Iowa.

Among the nesting birds, the best finds were two Red-necked Grebe nests, a Mississippi Kite nest, Iowa's first Eurasian Collared-

Dove nest, and two Eurasian Tree Sparrow nests. Other good finds were evidence of nesting by Wilson's Phalaropes at several sites and evidence of Black Tern nesting at two sites. Besides one nest, American Bittern were found at seven other sites and probably nested at all of them, the best showing for that species in years. Both the Trumpeter Swan and Osprey release programs had good summers with record numbers of swan nests.

Among species of some conservation interest, Least Terns at Council Bluffs had one of their best years in a decade and Piping Plovers attempted to nest at both Iowa nesting sites. A few Black-crowned Night-Herons and Loggerhead Shrikes were found, indicating their continued presence in the state. Although the number of reports was down, Henslow's Sparrows continued to be present in greater numbers than was anticipated a few years ago. In general, grassland birds such as Upland Sandpiper, Bobolink, Dickcissel, and Sedge Wren seemed to be doing well in Iowa this summer. Few Barn Owls and Carolina Wrens were reported, probably a result of the severe winter we experienced last year. There were numerous reports of Black-billed Cuckoo and Purple Martin, two species that had been mentioned in the *IOU News* as worthy of reports. I still believe that both species are harder to find now than they were in the 1980s.

#### SPECIES DATA

ALL CAPS = Casual or Accidental species (\* = documented)

**Common Loon:** A record summer for this species with 10 reports: 1 (basic) at Crystal Hills WMA in Hancock Co. on 1 Jun (WF), 1 (basic) at Lost Island L. in Palo Alto Co. on 2 Jun (LAS), 1 (alternate) at L. Conatoma in Mason City on 2 Jun (CJF), 1 (first summer) at a small pond near Clear Lake from 3 to 7 Jun (PHe, RGo, CJF), 1 (basic) at the MidAmer-

ican Energy ponds near Council Bluffs on 14, 15 Jun (JJD), 1 (basic) at L. Ahquabi S.P. in Warren Co. on 15 Jun (JSi), 1 (basic) at Raccoon R. Park in West Des Moines from early June to 31 Jul (JZ, SSt, RSt, BE), 1 (basic) at Denison in Crawford Co. on 21 Jul (PE), 1 (basic) on a borrow pit south of Mason City from 2 to 31 Jul (JLW, CJF, RGo, JLF), and 1 (basic) on Briarstone L. in Mason City on 18 Jul (RGo, CJF). The latter two reports may have been a single bird.

**Pacific Loon:** 1 at the S&G sand pits south of Iowa City from 18 Jun to 5 Jul (MCD\*, JLF\*, CE\*, THK) is the second recent summer record of this species in Iowa. Are others being overlooked?

**Pied-billed Grebe:** Evidence of nesting was noted in Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, Hancock, Kossuth, Story, Van Buren, and Warren counties (PHe, MPr, BPr, WF, MCK, HZ, DKi, JSi). The latter two records seem to be first county nesting records.

**Red-necked Grebe:** Two nests found on 4 Jul at Cheever L. in Emmet Co. (LAS) are only the second confirmed nesting report for Iowa. By the end of the period, 1 or 2 young were evident with both pairs.

**Eared Grebe:** All: 3 at Forney L. in Fremont Co. on 3 Jun (BKP, LJP) and 3 pairs at Grovers L. in Dickinson Co. on 2 Jun (LAS).

**Western Grebe:** All: 1 at Dan Green Sl. in Clay Co. on 2 Jun (LAS), 1 at Hallett's Quarry near Ames from 3 to 7 Jun (JJD, HZ), 5 at Trumbull L. in Clay Co. on 8 Jun (LAS), and 4 at Iowa L. in Emmet Co. on 4 Jul (LAS).

**American White Pelican:** High counts were 350 at Ventura M. in Cerro Gordo Co. on 17 Jun (JJD) and 300 at Badger L. in Monona Co. on 3 Jun (BFH). Besides the usual summering birds in the Great Lakes region and at Saylorville Res., a few were reported at sites throughout Iowa.

**Double-crested Cormorant:** The only report of nesting was at Coralville Res. where 39 nests were noted on 26 Jun (MCD). Elsewhere from 1 to 24 were found in Butler,

Cerro Gordo, Fremont, Kossuth, Mills, Story, Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (MPr, JJD, BKP, LJP, BPr, WO, HZ, DeC, BFH, CJF).

**American Bittern:** 1 or 2 in Boone (2 sites), Cerro Gordo, Fremont, Kossuth, Palo Alto, and Polk, counties (JJD, MPr, PHe, BKP, LJP, MCK, DT) were all probably indicative of nesting, the most such activity reported in at least a decade. A nest was found at Myre Sl. in Winnebago Co. on 12 Jul (WF).

**Least Bittern:** 1 or 2 were found in Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dickinson, Fremont, Guthrie, Iowa, Jackson, Kossuth, and Polk counties (RGo, PHe, LAS, MCD, JLF, JJD, CE, MCK, BE, DT), suggesting breeding at all of those sites.

**Great Blue Heron:** 53 at Saylorville Res. on 29 Jul (BE) was the only indication of a post-breeding concentration.

**Great Egret:** 211 at Green Island A. in Jackson Co. on 5 Jul (JLF) and 70 at Forney L. on 15 Jul (BKP, LJP) were the high counts. Elsewhere, from 1 to 20 were found in Allamakee, Butler, Clay, Johnson, Kossuth, Sac, Story, Warren, Winnebago, Woodbury, and Worth counties (MPr, BPr, LAS, THK, JJD, HZ, PHA, RIA, WF, BFH, CJF).

**Snowy Egret:** All: Singles at Banner Pits in Warren Co. on 10 Jun (JSi), Port Neal in Woodbury Co. on 11 Jun (BFH), MidAmerican Energy Ponds on 25 Jun (MPr), and Forney L. on 1 Jul (BKP, LJP). This is more reports than most summers.

**Little Blue Heron:** No reports.

**Cattle Egret:** Most: 33 at Forney L. on 10 Jul (MCD, JLF). Elsewhere, from 1 to 22 were found in Benton, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Fremont, Hancock, Iowa, Johnson, Kossuth, Polk, Pottawattamie, and Warren counties (TJB, CJF, LAS, MPr, JLW, MCD, MCK, DT, JJD, JSi).

**Green Heron:** From 1 to 8 were found in Butler, Cerro Gordo, Lee, Marshall, Polk, Sac, Woodbury, and Worth counties (MPr, CJF, JLW, DT, BFH), about typical for summer.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** From 1 to 3 were seen in Cerro Gordo, Fremont, Kossuth, and Woodbury counties (RGo, MCD, JLF, BKP, LJP, MCK, BFH), up somewhat from recent years. No one mentioned any evidence of nesting.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** All: an imm. at Errington M. in Polk Co. on 7 Jun (DT).

**Ibis species:** 1 was seen at Eagle Flats WMA in Hancock Co. on 18 Jun (WF).

**Turkey Vulture:** A nest in Warren Co. contained 2 young on 2 Jul (JSi).

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Singles were found at Forney L. (MCD, JLF, BKP, LJP), Secret L. in Fremont Co. (MCD, JLF), Port Neal (BFH), and Dan Green Sl. (LAS).

**Snow Goose:** From 1 to 7 were found in Clay, Fremont, Grundy, Jackson, Pottawattamie, Winneshiek, and Woodbury counties (LAS, MCD, JLF, JJD, BKP, LJP, DeC, BFH).

**Canada Goose:** Huser found a "cackling" form Canada Goose among the birds at New L. in Woodbury Co. on 3 Jun.

**Trumpeter Swan:** Nine "wild" nests were reported in Iowa (BEh), indicative of the continued success of this reintroduction program.

**Gadwall:** Broods were reported at McIntosh W.A. in Cerro Gordo Co. (PHe) and Goose L. in Kossuth Co. (THK).

**American Wigeon:** All: Singles at Dan Green Sl. on 8 Jun (LAS), Cole Ponds in Story Co. on 12 Jun (HZ), and Maynard Reece WPA in Kossuth Co. on 1 Jul (MCK).

**American Black Duck:** Singles at McIntosh WA on 1, 3 Jun (RGo, PHe-details) and at Forney L. on 15 Jul (BKP, LJP) are the first summer records since 1994.

**Northern Shoveler:** Broods were reported at Union Slough NWR and Maynard Reece WPA (MCK).

**Northern Pintail:** From 1 to 5 were found in Clay, Dickinson, Hancock, Johnson, Kossuth, Monona, and Story counties (LAS, WF, MCD, MCK, BFH, HZ).

**Green-winged Teal:** All: 2 males at Dan Green Sl. on 23 Jun (LAS), 10 at Maynard Reece WPA on 1 Jul (MCK), a pair with young at 4 Mile WPA in Emmet Co. on 14 Jul (LAS), and 2 at Otter Creek M. in Tama Co. on 15 Jul (MCD).

**Canvasback:** All: Singles at Mebaska Pond in Boone Co. from 2–24 Jun (JJD), Dan Green Sl. on 8 Jun (LAS), Jemmerson Sl. in Dickinson Co. on 15 Jul, and Coralville Res. on 20 Jul (MCD).

**Redhead:** Other than 2 at Harrier M. in Boone Co. on 2 Jun (JLF), all reports were from northern Iowa where a brood was found at Spring Run W.A. in Dickinson Co. on 31 Jul (THK).

**Ring-necked Duck:** All: A male s. of Iowa City from 10 Jun to 22 Jul (MCD, JLF) and 2 at Maynard Reece WPA on 1 Jul (MCK).



**Lesser Scaup:** 1 or 2 were found in Cerro Gordo, Johnson, Kossuth, Palo Alto, and Poweshiek counties (CJF, MCD, JLF, MCK, LAS, MPr). All were probably late migrants or nonbreeders.

**Bufflehead:** All: A male at Spring Run W.A. on 16 Jun (LAS).

**Hooded Merganser:** From 1 to 4 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Johnson, Kossuth (brood), Polk (brood), Pottawattamie, Sac (brood), and Woodbury counties (JJD, RGo, LAS, MCD, MCK, MPr, BPr, BE, BFH).

**Common Merganser:** All: Singles at Clear L. on 1 Jun (RGo, PHe), Trumbull L. in Clay Co. on 10 Jun (LAS), and at MidAmerican Energy Ponds on 10, 11 Jul (MCD-details).

**Ruddy Duck:** From 1 to 8 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Emmet, Johnson, Kossuth, Polk, Story and Winneshiek counties (JJD, PHe, MCD, JLF, MCK, BE, DT, HZ, DeC). Most: 19 at 12 Mile L. in Emmet Co. on 17 Jun (LAS).

**Osprey:** The introduction program continued with 4 birds each successfully released in July at Saylorville Res., Hartman Reserve Nature Center, and Coralville Res. (PS). At Coralville, three "wild" birds appeared in July and two began work on a nest. In northwestern Iowa, Iowa's first recent nest near Cayler Prairie in Dickinson Co. was unsuccessful, apparently succumbing to a violent storm in early June (DCH). Finally, a late migrant was at Clear L. on 1 Jun (RGo, PHe), and an early fall migrant was near Crystal Lake in Hancock Co. on 28, 29 Jul (WF).

**Mississippi Kite:** A nest at Wakonda Golf Course in Des Moines contained at least 1 young in July (AO). A late nest in Urbandale in August 2000 produced 1 young. That bird suffered a broken wing and was taken to the ISU Animal Care Clinic on 18 Aug where it eventually was euthanized in March 2001 (Phil Walsh, Emily Sullivan, fide JJD).

**Bald Eagle:** The recovery of this species continues with about 130 nests active this year. Seven new nesting sites were reported including one new county (Taylor) raising the total to 52 counties (BEh).

**Northern Harrier:** All: A female at Hayden Prairie in Howard Co. on 21 Jul (DeC), 1 near Crystal Lake in Hamilton Co. on 27 Jul (WF), and 1 near Burt in Kossuth Co. on 29 Jul (MCK).

**Cooper's Hawk:** 1 or 2 were reported in Cerro Gordo, Kossuth (nest), Marion, Monona, Sac, Story, and Winneshiek counties (RGo, MCK, MPr, BFH, Erv Klaas fide JJD, DeC). All probably were indicative of local nesting.

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** All: Singles at Yellow River F. on 29 Jun (CE) and near Mt. Sterling in Van Buren Co. on 29 Jul (DKi).

**Broad-winged Hawk:** All: Singles at Lick Creek Unit, Shimek S.F. in Lee Co. on 1 Jun (RIC), Yellow River F. on 23 Jun (CE), and Coon Creek WMA in Winneshiek Co. on 4 Jul (DeC).



Swainson's Hawk nested in Cerro Gordo County and produced two young, July 2001. Photo by Carolyn J. Fischer.

**Swainson's Hawk:** All: 1 or 2 juveniles near Mason City from 18 to 31 Jul (CJF, RGo, PHe) and 1 at Dugout Creek WPA on 31 Jul (THK).

**Peregrine Falcon:** All: Singles at Dan Green Sl. on 2 Jun (LAS) and at Runnells A. in Marion Co. on 26 Jul (MPr).

**Gray Partridge:** All reports were from north-central Iowa: 1 near Britt in Hancock Co. on 8 Jun (WF), 1 near Corwith in Hancock Co. and 2 near Meservey in Cerro Gordo Co. on 17 Jun (JJD), and 4 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 4 Jul (PHe).

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** Several broods were noted in the Kellerton area this summer (Mel Moe fide JJD).

**Northern Bobwhite:** All: 1 or 2 were found in Fremont, Johnson, and Mahaska counties, all in July (MCD).

**Virginia Rail:** From 1 to 6 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, and Hancock counties (JLF, RGo, PHe), probably an indication of their elusiveness during the summer.

**Sora:** All: 1 at Jemmerson Sl. in Dickinson Co. on 13 Jul (MPr) and 2 at Zirbel Sl. in Cerro Gordo Co. on 31 Jul (CJF).

**Common Moorhen:** All: 1 at Goose L. in Clinton Co. and 2 at Green Island A. in Jackson Co., both on 5 Jul (JLF).

**American Coot:** Besides broods at known nesting sites in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, and Kossuth counties (JJD, PHe, LAS, MCK), a brood was found at Banner Pits in Warren Co. (JSi), somewhat south of its usual Iowa nesting range.

**Sandhill Crane:** Besides 14 at Green Island WA. on 5 Jul (JLF), a few were found at Otter Creek M. (MCD, RGo) and Cardinal M. in Winneshiek Co. (DeC), both known sites for the species.

**American Golden-Plover:** All: 1 at Stony L. in Dickinson Co. on 30 Jun (LAS) and 1 at Dugout Creek WPA on 15 Jul (LAS).

**Semipalmated Plover:** Last in spring: 3 at Mark Twain NWR in Louisa Co. on 14 Jun (JLF). First in fall: 1 at Otter Creek M. on 15 Jul (MCD) and 1 at Port Neal on 21 Jul (BFH).

**Piping Plover:** 3 pairs were at the MidAmerican Energy Ponds on 14, 15 Jun (JJD), about typical of recent years. A nest at Port Neal contained 4 eggs on 21 Jul but was abandoned (BFH).

**Killdeer:** 71 at Jefferson Co. P. on 13 Jul (DKi) and 76 at Port Neal on 21 Jul (BFH) were the only reports of large post-breeding concentrations.

**American Avocet:** All: 1 at Little Swan L. in Dickinson Co. on 30 Jun (LAS), and 1 at Coralville Res. from 20-30 Jul (MCD, JLF).

**Greater Yellowlegs:** First in fall: 1 at Banner Pits on 4 Jul (JSi) and 1 at Cardinal M. on 5 Jul (DeC).

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** Last in spring: 2 at Coralville Res. on 3 Jun (MCD). First in fall: 13 at Dugout Creek WPA on 30 Jun (LAS). One at Coralville Res. on 21 Jun defies classification but probably was southbound (MCD). The 300 at Union Sl. NWR on 17 Jul (MCK) were by far the most reported.

**Solitary Sandpiper:** First in fall: 1 at Maynard Reece WPA on 1 Jul (MCK) and 1 at New Albin in Allamakee Co. on 2 Jul (DeC).

**Willet:** All: 2 at Coralville Res. on 15 Jun (MCD) and an amazing 28 at Saylorville Res. on 2 Jul (Scott Rolfes fide SJD).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** Two pairs copulating at Union Sl. NWR on 16 Jun (MCK) was the only direct evidence of nesting reported.

**Upland Sandpiper:** From 1 to 6 were reported in Audubon, Dickinson, Emmet, Fremont, Hancock (nest), Hardin, Iowa, Kossuth, O'Brien, Story, Winneshiek, and Worth counties (BKP, JLP, MPr, BPr, LAS, JJD, WF, CE, MCK, DK, HZ, Larry Reis fide DeC, RIC).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** 1 at Secret L. in Fremont Co. on 19 Jul (JLF details) is the first July record of this species in Iowa.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** All: Singles at Coralville Res. on 3 Jun (MCD), Saylorville Res. on 25 Jul (PHA, RIA), and Coralville Res. on 26 Jul (JLF).

**Sanderling:** From 1 to 5 were reported in Marion, Polk, and Woodbury counties (MPr, BE, PHe, BFH).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Last in spring: 2 at Coralville Res. on 8 Jun (MCD). Most: 40 at Colo Ponds on Story Co. on 5 Jun (HZ). First in fall: 1 at Harrier M. and 5 near Gilmore City in Humboldt Co. on 8 Jul (JJD). One at Coralville Res. on 16 Jun (MCD) could have been headed either way.

**Least Sandpiper:** First in fall: 4 at Coralville Res. on 26 Jun (3rd earliest) and 10 at Fort Atkinson in Winneshiek Co. on 28 Jun (DeC). Most: 33 in Cerro Gordo Co. on 13 Jul (PHe).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Last in spring: 15 near Union Sl. NWR on 16 Jun (MCK), 18 at Coralville Res. on 16 Jun (MCD), and 1 still there on 22 Jun (MCD). Most: 77 in Clay Co. on 5 Jun (LAS).

**Baird's Sandpiper:** 1 at Sandhill L. in Woodbury Co. on 3 Jun (BFH) and 2 at MidAmerican Energy Ponds on 3 Jun (BKP, LJP) were the last spring birds. One at Teal Basin in Cerro Gordo Co. on 25 Jul (RGo) and 2 at Cardinal M. on 26 Jul (DeC) were the first southbound birds.

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** 2 at Mark Twain NWR on 14 Jun (JLF) and 1 at Coralville Res. on 16 Jul (MCD) were the last northbound birds. Three near Gilmore City in Humboldt Co. on 8 Jul (JJD) and 1 at Secret L. on 10 Jul (MCD) were the first southbound birds.

**Dunlin:** Last in spring: 4 in Wright Co. (JLF), 7 in Clay Co. (LAS), and 2 near Ogden in Boone Co. (JJD), all on 2 Jun.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** First in fall: 5 near Gilmore City in Pocahontas Co. on 8 Jul (JJD) and 2 at Fort Atkinson on 9 Jul (DeC). Most: 20 at Maynard Reece WPA on 17 Jul (MCK).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** No reports.

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** First in fall: 1 at Cardinal M. on 5 Jul (DeC) and 1 near Gilmore City in Humboldt Co. on 8 Jul (JJD). Most: 10 at Maynard Reece WPA on 17 Jul (MCK).

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** All: 2 at Port Neal on 21 Jul (BFH, details).

**American Woodcock:** All: 1 at Lime Creek Nature Center in Cerro Gordo Co. on 6 Jun (PHe).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Juveniles were seen at Maynard Reece WPA on 1 Jul (MCK) and Dugout Creek WPA on 15 Jul (LAS). Nesting was also suspected at Eagle L. WPA in Hancock Co. (WF). One near Archer in O'Brien Co. on 7 Jun (DK), 4 near Pioneer in Humboldt Co. on 8 Jun (DK), and a female at Coralville Res. on 16 Jun (MCD) probably were migrants as was 1 at Red Rock Res. on 26 Jul (MPr).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** All: 2 at Secret L. on 19 Jul (JLF).

**Laughing Gull:** 1 at Mark Twain NWR in Louisa Co. on 14 Jun (JLF\*).

**Franklin's Gull:** From 1 to 3 were seen in Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, Johnson, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury counties (PHe, THK, MCD, JJD, BFH). Most: 12 at Hallett's Quarry on 2 Jun (WO) and 45 at Dugout Creek WPA on 15 Jul (LAS).

**Ring-billed Gull:** As is typical, from 1 to 20 were found scattered around the state in Cerro Gordo, Emmet, Polk, and Pottawattamie counties (PHe, JJD, BKP, LJP).

**Caspian Tern:** From 1 to 5 were found in Clay, Johnson, Polk, Pottawattamie, and Sac counties (LAS, MCD, CE, BE, PHe, JLF, BKP, LJP, MPr).

**Forster's Tern:** As usual, small groups were found scattered around the state (Cerro Gordo, Clay, Johnson, Kossuth, and Story counties; JLW, LAS, MCD, MCK, HZ). The largest group was 30 at Hallett's Quarry on 2 Jun (WO). Although some of the birds appeared to be juveniles, there was no indication of any nesting in Iowa this year.

**Least Tern:** 7 nests at the MidAmerican Energy Ponds on 14, 15 Jun (JJD) is the most nesting activity there since 1991.

**Black Tern:** 2 nests were found at Spring Run W.A. in Dickinson Co. (LAS) and nesting was suspected at Eagle Flats W.A. in Hancock Co. (WF). There were the usual late migrants in early Jun and south-bound birds appearing by mid-July.

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** The big news was the first report of a nest for this species in Iowa. A nest with 2 young was found and photographed in Fenton in Kossuth Co. (HPe\*, THK) from 17 Jul on. Elsewhere, 1 was found near Afton in Union Co. on 27 Jun (Mel Moe fide DCH) and 2 were in Grinnell on 30 Jul (THK).



**Black-billed Cuckoo:** Mostly singles were reported in Cerro Gordo, Clay, Floyd, Greene, Hancock, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Kossuth, Monona, O'Brien, Palo Alto, Polk, Story, Washington, and Worth counties (RGo, BFH, JJD, SSt, RSt, DKi, CE, MCK, DK, LAS, BE). This covers most of the state, indicating a few are still around.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** From 1 to 4 were reported from about 19 counties, again spanning much of the state. This species continues to be much more common than the preceding species.

**Barn Owl:** Fresh pellets in Zelbert Freemyer's barn near Bedford in Taylor Co. indicate that at least one is still around although no evidence of nesting was detected (BEh). Presumably this past winter was hard on this species.

**Eastern Screech-Owl:** A brood in Liscomb in Marshall Co. in June contained 3 gray- and 2 red-phase young (BPr, MPr).

**Burrowing Owl:** 1 near Larchwood in Lyon Co. on 1 Jun (DCH, details) was the only report.

**Short-eared Owl:** 1 at Eagle Flats WA. on 3 Jul (WF) was the only report.

**Common Nighthawk:** Kenne, in commenting on the few he saw this summer, speculated that the change from gravel-covered roofs may be negatively affecting the nesting success of this species.

**Chuck-will's-widow:** All reports came from the usual site near Waubonsie S.P. in Fremont Co. (MCD, JLE, MPr).

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** 1 or 2 were reported from Allamakee, Kossuth, Lee, Marshall, O'Brien, Polk, and Winneshiek counties (MPr, BPr, MCK, DK, BE, DT, DeC). I suspect it was under-reported and is still reasonably common statewide.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Evidence of breeding included a nest near Hawarden in Sioux Co. on 16 Jun (Ken Hollinga fide JV) and a brood at Watermann Twp. in O'Brien Co. on 4 Jul (DK). Elsewhere birds were found at three sites in Winneshiek Co. in June (DeC), at Nobles Island in Allamakee Co. on 2 Jul (DeC), and at Green Island WA on 5 Jul (JLF). All reports were from the northern Iowa/Mississippi River lowlands summer range of this species.

**Pileated Woodpecker:** 1 or 2 were found in Allamakee, Iowa, Jones, Kossuth, Lee, Polk, and Tama counties (CE, MCK, RIC, JJD) where this species is expected. One on the Boone R. in Hamilton Co. on 4 Jul (Brent Danielson fide JJD) seemed to be at a new site.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Last in spring: 1 in Sac Co. on 8 Jun (MPr). One at Dog Creek P. in O'Brien Co. on 25 Jul (DK) ties the record early fall date.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Singles in Cerro Gordo Co. and at Grammer Grove P. in Marshall Co. on 3 Jun (PHe, MPr) and in Algona on 6 Jun (MCK) were the last spring birds.

**Acadian Flycatcher:** From 1 to 3 were reported in Allamakee, Clay, Delaware, Iowa, Jones, Lee, Marshall, and Warren counties (CE, DeC, LAS, JLE, MPr, PHA, RIA).

**Alder Flycatcher:** 1 in Algona on 7 Jun (MCK) was the last report for this typically late migrant.

**Willow Flycatcher:** From 1 to 6 were found in Cerro Gordo, Clay, Iowa, Jefferson, Marshall, Winneshiek, and Woodbury counties (JJD, PHe, THK, TJB, DKi, MPr, DeC, BFH), about typical for this species.

**Least Flycatcher:** 2 at Algona on 3 Jun (MCK) were the last obvious migrants. Singles at Hoover Nature Trail in Cedar Co. on 15 Jun (CE), at Hawkeye W.A. in Johnson Co. on 16 Jun (CE), and at Yellow River E on 23 Jun (CE) could have been late migrants or possibly nesters. The summer status of this species in Iowa is still a mystery.

**Eastern Phoebe:** Besides 3 pairs nesting in Cherokee Co. on 2 Jun, Erzen also found this species in Buena Vista, Clay, and Sac counties. In general, phoebes are uncommon and confined to river valleys in northwestern Iowa.

**Western Kingbird:** From 1 to 6 were found in this species' usual haunts in Fremont and Pottawattamie counties in southwestern Iowa (MPr, JJD, JLF, BKP, LJP), and Harr thought that it was common in northwestern Iowa. In central Iowa, a nest was found in Raccoon R. Park in West Des Moines (PHA, RIA, SSt, RSt), and 3 were seen at the State Capitol on 17 Jun (BE).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** A juvenile was seen along the Little Sioux R. in Clay Co. on 7 Jul (LAS).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** From 1 to 3 were found in Boone (brood), Cerro Gordo, Greene, Iowa, Jefferson (brood), Polk, and Worth counties (HZ, CJF, RGo, PHe, PE, CE, DKi, BE), a few more reports than last year.

**White-eyed Vireo:** All: Singles in Des Moines on 17 Jun (RIC), at the Farmington Unit of Shimek S.E. in Lee Co. on 18 Jun (CE), and near Boone in June (BEh, DH).

**Bell's Vireo:** From 1 to 5 were found in Fremont, Greene, Jefferson, Johnson, Marshall, Montgomery, Polk, Warren, and Woodbury counties (MPr, PE, DKi, CE, JJD, BE, SSt, RSt, DT, JSi, BFH), about typical for summer.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** From 1 to 5 were found in Allamakee, Boone, Delaware, Dickinson, Hamilton, Hardin, Johnson, Kossuth, Monona, O'Brien, Polk, Sac, and Winneshiek counties (DeC, JJD, MPr, BPr, JLF, MCK, BFH, DK, BE, SSt, RSt), about typical.

**American Crow:** 301 flying to a roost in Ames on 16 Jul (JJD) was about typical for mid-summer.

**Purple Martin:** From 1 to 35 were reported from Allamakee, Cass, Calhoun, Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, Fremont, Grundy, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Howard, Johnson, Kossuth, O'Brien, Pottawattamie, Sac, Story, and Winneshiek counties (MPr, BPr, MAP, CJF, PHe, DeC, MCD, MCK, DK). Most reports were of a colony, indicating continued nesting throughout Iowa, although seemingly at a lower level than in the past.

**Bank Swallow:** An estimated 1,500 at Forney L. on 5 Jul (BKP, LJP) and 2,000 at Coralville Res. on 27 Jul (THK) were unusually large post-breeding concentrations for Iowa.

**Carolina Wren:** All: Singles at L. Macbride S.P. in Johnson Co. on 15 Jun (CE), at Iowa City from 13–31 Jul (JLF), and in Ames on 20 Jul (JJD). Presumably the harsh 2000–2001 winter took its toll this species.

**Bewick's Wren:** No reports.

**Winter Wren:** A male seen singing at Smith W.A. in Kossuth Co. on 3 Jun (MCK) was the only report.

**Sedge Wren:** I received conflicting reports ranging from “many” near Fairfield (DKi) to “scarce” (Cerro Gordo Co., PHe) or “few” (Winneshiek Co., DeC).

**Marsh Wren:** 4 at Errington M. on 3 Jun (BE) and 1 at Hawkeye W.A. on 16 Jun (CE) were the only reports away from its northern Iowa stronghold.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** Reports from Cerro Gordo, Clay, Kossuth, Monona, and O'Brien (nest) counties (RGo, PE, MCK, BFH, DK) are all near the northern/western edge of this species' Iowa range.

**Veery:** All: 1 at Loess Hills W.A. in Monona Co. on 2 Jun (BFH), 2 at Grammer Grove P. on 3 Jun (MPr), 1 at Hagge Co. P. in Sac Co. on 8 Jun (MPr), and 4 at Backbone S.P. in Delaware Co. on 12 Jun (MPr, BPr).

**Wood Thrush:** From 1 to 5 were found in Allamakee, Boone, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dallas, Delaware, Emmet, Floyd, Fremont, Hamilton, Iowa, Jefferson, Jones, Kossuth, Lee, Mills, Polk, Pottawattamie, Sac, Webster, and Winneshiek counties (DeC, CE, JJD, PHe, PE, MPr, BPr, LAS, RGo, DKi, MCK, BE).

**Northern Mockingbird:** 2 at Spring Grove Cemetery in Linn Co. on 4 Jun (CE) was the only report.

**Blue-winged Warbler:** From 1 to 5 were found at the usual sites in Allamakee, Boone, Lee, and Winneshiek counties (DeC, CE, JJD). One in Cerro Gordo Co. on 3 Jun (PHe) was a bit out of its usual range. A male Lawrence's Warbler found at Yellow River F. on 30 Jun (DeC) is one of the few reports of that hybrid form for Iowa.

**Tennessee Warbler:** 1 at Algona on 9 Jun (MCK) was the only late migrant reported.

**Northern Parula:** From 1 to 3 were found in Fremont, Lee, and Polk counties (MPr, CE, BE, RIC).

**Yellow Warbler:** A nest at Raccoon R. Park on 14 Jul contained a young cowbird (BE).

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** A male at Grammer Grove P. on 3 Jun (MPr) was the only report.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** A male at Haugen W.A. in Cerro Gordo Co. on 3 Jun (PHe, details) is the first recent summer record.

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** All: Singles were reported from three sites in Johnson Co. (CE, JLF) and one in Polk Co. (PHA, RIA).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** 1 near Iowa City on 29 Jul (JLF) is a record early fall date.

**Blackpoll Warbler:** 1 at Nevada on 3 Jun (HZ) was the last spring migrant.

**Cerulean Warbler:** 1 or 2 were found in Allamakee, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Delaware, and Johnson counties (CE, PHe, PE, DH, BFH, LAS, MPr, BPr), about typical for summer.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** 1 at Yellow River E. on 23 Jun (CE) was the only report.

**American Redstart:** Reports of 15 at Amana Woods in Iowa Co. on 4 Jun (CE) and 12 in Allamakee Co. on 30 Jun (DeC) suggest that this species is still common in wooded portions of the state.

**Prothonotary Warbler:** From 1 to 3 were found in Allamakee, Johnson, and Lee counties (DeC, MPr, BPr, JLF, CE) where this species is expected. Kenne found it at three sites along the Des Moines R. near Algona at the northern fringe of its Iowa range.

**Worm-eating Warbler:** 2 at Shimek S.E. in Lee Co. on 18 Jun and 1 there on 30 Jun (CE) were the only reports.

**Ovenbird:** From 1 to 4 were found in Cerro Gordo, Clay, Delaware, Fremont, Kossuth, O'Brien, and Winneshiek counties (PHe, PE, MPr, BPr, MCK, DK, DeC). The "hot spot" for this species was Yellow River E. where Carter found 15 males and a nest with eggs on 30 Jun.

**Northern Waterthrush:** 1 at Kewash Nature Trail in Washington Co. on 1 Jun (CE, details) was the only report.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** From 1 to 3 were seen at the usual sites in Allamakee, Boone, and Lee counties (CE, JJD).

**Kentucky Warbler:** From 1 to 3 were found at the usual sites in Jones, Lee, Warren, and Winneshiek counties (CE, JSi, DeC).

**Mourning Warbler:** 1 at Call S.P. in Kossuth Co. on 3 Jun (MCK) was the only report.

**Hooded Warbler:** All: 3 males at L. Ahquabi S.P. in Warren Co. on 8 Jul including 1 that probably had young nearby (JSi).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** From 1 to 4 were found in Jefferson, Johnson, Lee, Louisa, and Warren counties (DKi, MCD, CE, JLF, PHA, RIA). All except the Warren Co. record were in southeastern Iowa where this species is most likely to be found.

**Summer Tanager:** From 1 to 4 were found in Fremont, Lee, and Warren counties (BKP, LJP, MPr, CE, JSi), all usual sites for this species.

**Scarlet Tanager:** From 1 to 7 were found in Allamakee, Boone, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dallas, Delaware, Fremont, Iowa, Jefferson, Johnson, Kossuth, Lee, Marshall, Monona, Polk, Poweshiek, and Winneshiek counties (DeC, CE, JJD, DCH, CJF, RGo, PHe, JLW, BFH, MPr, BPr, DKi, MCK, PE, BE, RV, CV). This covers all but far northwestern Iowa.

**Eastern Towhee:** From 1 to 10 were found in Cerro Gordo, Clay, Crawford, Ida, Monona, Polk, Poweshiek, Sioux, and Winneshiek counties (JLW, PE, RGo, CV, RV, DCH, DeC). The reports from northwestern Iowa (Clay, Ida, Sioux counties) indicate the presence of a few birds in suitable habitat in that part of the state. One wonders if a few Spotted Towhees also occur in that region (see Silcock 2001, *Iowa Bird Life* 71:61-64).



**Clay-colored Sparrow:** I mist-netted at Crystal Hills W.A. in Hancock Co. on 1 Jun (RFl, WF) was the only report.

**Lark Sparrow:** From 1 to 7 were found in Boone, Fremont, Johnson, Marshall, Polk (brood), and Pottawattamie counties (MPr, BE).

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** The few reports were from Cass, Cerro Gordo, Jefferson, Poweshiek (nest), and Polk counties (MAP, RGo, DKi, RV, CV, BE). I suspect it was under-reported.

**Henslow's Sparrow:** From 1 to 3 were found in Benton, Cerro Gordo, Jasper, Jefferson, Polk, and Ringgold counties (TJB, RGo, PHe, Ron VanNimwegen fide JJD, DKi, BE, MPr), down a bit from last year. **Harris's Sparrow:** A male in western Sioux Co. on 16 Jun (Ken Hollinga fide JV) is only the third summer report of this common migrant.

**Blue Grosbeak:** As usual, a few were found in Fremont and Pottawattamie counties (BKP, LJP, MPr, JJD). One at Lime Creek Nature Center near Mason City on 27 Jun, 3 Jul (CJF\*, RGo, PHe) was far out of its usual range.

**Dickcissel:** Few commented but this species seemed to be common to abundant around Iowa although it seemed to arrive in northern Iowa in late May or early June, later than normal.

**Bobolink:** Some individuals suggested it was common this summer (PHe, MPr). Kent found a flock of 50 near Cayler Prairie in Dickinson Co. on 31 Jul.



Great-tailed Grackle in Cerro Gordo County, Iowa in July 2001. Photo by Carolyn J. Fischer.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** The only comment came from central Iowa where they were common at Errington M. in Polk Co. (BE, DT).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** From 1 to 4 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Fremont, Greene, Polk, Pottawattamie, Story, and Woodbury counties (JJD, RGo, PHe, BKP, LJP, BE, MPr, HZ, BFH). Birds found at Teal Basin in Cerro Gordo Co. (RGo) push their range a bit closer to Minnesota in north-central Iowa.

**Brown-headed Cowbird:** See Yellow Warbler.

**Orchard Oriole:** From 1 to 5 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Dickinson, Fremont, Johnson, Kossuth, Polk, Winneshiek, Woodbury, and Worth counties (JJD, RGo, JLW, MPr, CE, MCK, BE, DT, DeC, BFH), about typical for summer.

**House Finch:** Singles on farmsteads near Corwith in Hancock Co. on 17 Jun (JJD) were unusual for the rural environments they occupied. Apparently this species is starting to move from urban to rural areas in Iowa.

**Red Crossbill:** All: Single males near Boone on 12 Jun (GD) and at Ventura in Cerro Gordo Co. on 15, 17 Jul (CJF, PHe).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** 2 nests, each containing young birds, found north of Burlington on 24 Jun (PL) are only the third and fourth documented nests for Iowa.

#### CONTRIBUTORS

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RIA	Reid I. Allen	West Des Moines
TJB	Thomas J. Benson	Ames
DeC	Dennis Carter	Decorah
RIC	Bob Cecil	Des Moines
JJD	James J. Dinsmore	Ames
SJD	Stephen J. Dinsmore	Starkville, MS
GD	Gian Dodici	Boone
MCD	Michael C. Dooley	Cedar Rapids
CE	Chris Edwards	North Liberty
BEh	Bruce Ehresman	Ames
BE	Bery Engebretsen	Clive
PE	Pete Ernzen	Ida Grove
WF	Will Fields	Ames
CJF	Carolyn J. Fischer	Mason City
RFl	Rob Fletcher	Ames
JLF	James L. Fuller	Iowa City
RGo	Rita A. Goranson	Mason City
DCH	Douglas C. Harr	Boone
PHe	Paul Hertzell	Mason City
BFH	Bill F. Huser	South Sioux City, NE
MCK	Matthew C. Kenne	Algona
THK	Thomas H. Kent	Iowa City
DKi	Dave Killman	Fairfield
DK	Darwin Koenig	Paullina
PL	Peter Lowther	Chicago, IL
WO	Wolf Oesterreich	Ames
AO	Amy Offenburger	Des Moines

PKB	Babs K. Padelford	Bellevue, NE
LJP	Loren J. Padelford	Bellevue, NE
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MAP	Marietta A. Petersen	Walnut
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PS	Pat Schlarbaum	Nevada
LAS	Lee A. Schoenewe	Spencer
JSi	Jim Sinclair	Indianola
RSt	Rich Stilwell	West Des Moines
SSt	Sharon Stilwell	West Des Moines
DT	Dennis Thompson	Johnston
JV	John Van Dyk	Sioux Center
CV	Connie Van Ervelde	Grinnell
RV	Robert Van Ervelde	Grinnell
JLW	Jan L. Walter	Mason City
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## Report of the Records Committee for 2000

*Ann M. Johnson*

*The Records Committee reviewed 46 records from 2000. Of these, 39 were accepted and 7 were not. Of the accepted records, two were identified only to family (jaeger and Selasphorus sp. hummingbird). One of the not-accepted records was identified correctly but was probably an escapee (Whooper Swan). Another not-accepted record (nesting Rufous Hummingbird) raised some interesting speculation*

*because the nest was found in the same proximity as an accepted record of a female Selasphorus sp. hummingbird that was coming to a feeder.*

Committee members for 2000 with years in which their terms expire were Chris Edwards (2001), James L. Fuller (2002), Matthew C. Kenne (2003), Robert I. Cecil and Paul Hertzel (2004), Jim Sinclair (2005), Thomas H. Kent (2006), and Ann M. Johnson (secretary, appointed by the committee). Lee Schoenewe was nominated by the committee and appointed by the IOU Board of Directors to fill a regular term beginning in 2001. Robert I. Cecil resigned and Paul Hertzel was nominated and appointed to complete his term.

The year 2000 marked the transition to the new secretary and the use of the Internet to conduct business. This transition was slow at times, but the new Internet procedures will increase the efficiency of the committee in the future and make results more readily available on the IOU website.

The four-digit number (year and sequence number) assigned to each record reviewed by the Records Committee is included for future reference. Records are classified as follows: A = Accepted (-S = specimen, -P = photograph, -R = recording, -D = documentation) and NA = Not Accepted. To be Accepted, a record must receive 7 votes on the initial review or 6 votes on a subsequent review. The subcategories A-S, A-P, and A-R indicate that physical evidence supports the identification, and records are subclassified based on a majority vote. References to *IBL* are the page of the field reports in *Iowa Bird Life* where the record is cited. The P- numbers refer to the IOU Photo File entry number. Published notes and previous citations may contain more details. An \* indicates a previously uncited documentation.

#### 2000 RECORDS ACCEPTED

**Red-throated Loon:** 9 Apr at Trumbull L. in Clay Co. (00-06, *IBL* 70:133) and 12 Apr at Little Wall L. in Hamilton Co. (00-07, *IBL* 70:133).

**Pacific Loon:** 29 May at Hallett's Quarry in Story Co. (00-16, *IBL* 70:133).

**Anhinga:** 14 May at Dudgeon L. in Benton Co. (00-15, *IBL* 70:133, Moore 2000).

**Tricolored Heron:** 29 April to 2 May at Cardinal M. in Winneshiek Co. (00-11, P-1002, *IBL* 70:134, Fuller 2001).

**King Eider:** 5 Mar at IPS Ponds in Woodbury Co. (00-45, \*Jerry Probst).



- Swallow-tailed Kite:** 14 Sep to 15 Sep in Portland Township in Cerro Gordo Co. (00-23, *IBL* 71:34).
- Ferruginous Hawk:** 20 Dec at Hitchcock N.A. in Pottawattamie Co. (00-40, \*Mark Orsag).
- Gyr Falcon:** 21 Dec to 22 Dec west of Ames in Boone Co. (00-41, *IBL* 71:88, Dinsmore and Dinsmore 2001).
- Snowy Plover:** 6 May at Sedan Bottoms W.M.A. in Appanoose Co. (00-14, *IBL* 70:136).
- Black-necked Stilt:** 14 Apr to 15 Apr at Cone M. in Louisa Co. (00-08, P-1001, *IBL* 70:136).
- Whimbrel:** 6 June to 7 June at Coralville Res. in Johnson Co. (00-18, *IBL* 70:174) and 21 May at Jester P. in Polk Co. (00-46, \*Bery Engbretsen).
- Red Knot:** 20 Aug at Saylorville Res. in Polk Co. (00-24, *IBL* 71:36).
- Jaeger species:** 21 Nov to 28 Nov at Keokuk in Lee Co. (00-33, *IBL* 71:37).
- Black-headed Gull:** 7 Oct to 8 Oct Spirit L. in Dickinson Co. (00-26, *IBL* 71:37).
- Mew Gull:** 12 Mar at Smith's Sl. in Clay Co. (00-05, *IBL* 70:137) and 31 Oct to 14 Nov at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. (00-29, *IBL* 71:37).
- California Gull:** 23 Oct at Red Rock Res. in Marion Co. (00-27, *IBL* 71:37) and 5 Dec at Muscatine in Muscatine Co. (00-35, *IBL* 71:89).
- Iceland Gull:** 5 Dec at Muscatine in Muscatine Co. (00-34, *IBL* 71:89).
- Eurasian Collared-Dove:** 4 Feb at Ames in Story Co. (00-02, *IBL* 70:96) and 30 Apr, 8 Jul, and 30 Dec at Montgomery in Dickinson Co. (00-12, 00-20, 00-42, *IBL* 70:137, 176, 71:38).
- White-winged Dove:** 1 Jun to 18 Jun in Webster Township in Hamilton Co. (00-17, *IBL* 70:176) and 27 Jun in Grimes in Polk Co. (00-19, *IBL* 70:176).
- Burrowing Owl:** 1 Aug near Rock Rapids in Lyon Co. (00-22, *IBL* 70:176).
- Rufous Hummingbird:** 7 Nov at Dubuque in Dubuque Co. (00-30, P-1003, *IBL* 71:38).
- Selasphorus* sp.:** Raising some interesting speculation, a female *Selasphorus* sp. hummingbird was coming to a feeder from 19 Jul to 24 Jul in the same neighborhood as the unaccepted nesting record (00-44) in Mason City in Cerro Gordo Co. (00-21, *IBL* 70:176).
- Black-billed Magpie:** 7 Dec at Hitchcock N.A. in Pottawattamie Co. (00-37, *IBL* 71:91).
- Pygmy Nuthatch:** 30 Oct at Algona in Kossuth Co. (00-28, *IBL* 71:39, Kenne 2001).
- Mountain Bluebird:** 15 Apr east of Peterson in Clay Co. (00-09, *IBL* 70:138) and 10 Dec northwest of Redfield in Dallas Co. (00-39, *IBL* 71:91).
- Bohemian Waxwing:** 11 Nov at Marble Beach S.P. in Dickinson Co. (00-31, *IBL* 71:40).
- Orange-crowned Warbler:** 29 Feb at Lisbon in Linn Co. (00-04, P-1000, *IBL* 70:98).
- Pine Warbler:** 10 Dec to 21 Dec at Des Moines in Polk Co. (00-38, \*Mark Rouw and Rita Johannsen).
- Western Tanager:** 1 May at Parker's Woods in Cerro Gordo Co. (00-13, *IBL* 70:140, Goranson 2001).
- Brewer's Blackbird:** 27 Feb at Silver L. in Worth Co. (00-03, *IBL* 70:100).

#### 2000 RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

**Whooper Swan:** 8 Jan at Heron Bend in Lee Co. (00-01, *IBL* 70:92, 134).

The identification was accepted but the origin of the bird was thought to probably be one of those that had escaped from captivity in Rockford, Illinois a few years ago.

**Common Black Hawk:** The committee could not identify this dark raptor but suggested a dark-phased Broad-winged hawk was a likely possibility (00-25, *IBL* 71:34).

**Swainson's Hawk:** Members felt that this December buteo was most likely a Red-tailed Hawk, a species that can show much variation (00-32, *IBL* 71:88).

**Swainson's Hawk:** While much of the description was suggestive of this species, members felt that this December buteo, which would be extremely late for Swainson's, could not be conclusively identified from the description given (00-36, *IBL* 71:88).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Although this species is becoming more widespread throughout the state, observers must still be aware of the continuing presence of escaped Ringed Turtle-Doves. While the identification was probably correct, the committee was unable to determine from the description that the bird was without doubt a Eurasian Collared-Dove (00-43, *IBL* 71:90).

**Rufous Hummingbird:** An incredible nesting record that was unfortunately discovered just as the birds fledged. The video quality left too many doubts with members and outside experts (00-44, P-1004, *IBL* 70:176).

**Common Raven:** Because of the subjective criteria used to differentiate this very rare vagrant from a crow, this record was not accepted on a split vote (00-10, *IBL* 70:138).

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# Records from the Past: Yellow-billed Loon, Garganey, and Black-necked Stilt

Thomas H. Kent

*This is the third in a series of articles on unpublished rare bird sightings that have been reviewed by the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (Kent 2001). Each of the birds in this account represents a first accepted state record.*

**Yellow-billed Loon**, 18 April 1999, Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo Co., Jan L. Walter, 99-04.

Iowa's first accepted Yellow-billed Loons were found in the spring and fall of 1999. Jan Walter documented the spring bird that was found by Curt Nelson and seen with Carolyn Fischer.



Yellow-billed Loon,  
2 December 1999, Little  
Wall Lake, Hamilton Co. by  
Reid I. Allen.

Clearly larger than the 2 alternate-plumaged Common Loons it was between (sideview). Bill: pale yellow with straight yellow culmen that never looked black or dark in any light condition or angle. Bill: slightly upturned and thicker at the base compared to nearby Common Loons. Crown: brown, sharply peaked front and back. Face: very pale with tannish rather than grayish coloration. Brown circular patch in the auricular area. Pale coloration extended around this patch and forward across the face and up and around the small dark eye in a noticeable band. Chin, throat, foreneck, side of neck, and breast the same pale color. Forehead, crown, nape, and hind-neck brown. Back and wings: darker brown with paler feather edges. Underparts not seen. Bird was in basic plumage and with 6 alternate-plumaged Common Loons. They drifted or swam slowly from west to east in a row, with the Yellow-billed between 2 Commons and the other 4 Commons slightly behind. Followed them along the lakeshore to another

place where they were about 100 yards from the shore. At this time, the sun was shining brightly. None did much diving.

The color and shape of the bill, peaked head, and brown auricular patch are key to identification of this species in basic plumage. Yellow-billed Loon was on the list of species most likely to be added to the state list (Kent and Dinsmore 1996). This Arctic species has been found with increasing frequency in the Midwest in recent years. A second bird was found at Little Wall Lake on 1 December 1999 and moved to Hallett's Quarry in Story Co., where it remained until 21 December (Healy and Zaletel 2000). A photograph of that bird is presented here.

**Garganey**, 11 May 1991, Port Neal, Woodbury Co., Jerry Probst and Bill Huser, 91-02.

Jerry Probst and Bill Huser documented Iowa's first Garganey, which they saw along with Bob Livermore, Dave Stage, Bob Moritz, and Art Huser at the fly ash pits at the power plant at Port Neal from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m. Probst's narrative:

Dave Stage began scoping ducks on shore. I was doing shore birds in another area. He came back to truck for a bird book and announced: "a male Garganey." We all set up our scopes, and there it was, perched on shore with other ducks and geese. The first field mark noticed was the broad white eyebrows on the red-brown head. I could also see the contrast of the back and sides and flanks (gray and white) to the red-brown head, neck and below the neck area (breast). The belly was white. I observed it walking, and it did not have visible bands on the dark feet. It then flew with light blue forewing (shoulder) and green speculum. It appeared to be the same size and shape as a Blue-winged Teal on the same shore.

Huser noted:

Distinctively marked duck roosting with Blue-winged Teal. Similar in size. Most strikingly — a brownish head and face with a broad, arching white eye stripe, tapering to a fine line extending onto nape. Dark bill. Perched in shallow water. Its rich brown breast contrasted sharply with gray flanks. Both breast



and flanks finely barred with black over the mentioned background colors.

Iowa's second Garganey, found at Forney Lake in Fremont Co. from to 2 to 12 April 1999 (Schmid 2000), was seen by many observers. Garganey is a recognized, albeit rare, spring migrant in the Midwest, migrating north with Blue-winged Teal. This long-distant Eurasian migrant could over-shoot to the east and west coasts of America in the fall and not be detected because of the nondescript plumage of females and basic-plumaged males. The breeding (alternate) plumage of males lasts on a few months.

**Black-necked Stilt**, 1-2 June 1984, Union Slough N.W.R., Kossuth Co., John Guthrie, Robert K. Myers, Francis L. Moore, 84-19.

Iowa's first accepted record of a Black-necked Stilt is based on a bird photographed on 1 June 1984 by Guthrie and documented on 2 June by Myers and Moore. Moore's narrative is given below.



Black-necked Stilt, 1 June  
1984, Union Slough  
N.W.R., Kossuth Co. by  
John Guthrie.

We arrived at the northeastern corner of Union Slough N.W.R. along county road A40 and immediately saw the two Black-necked Stilts that we had heard were there. They were walking and feeding in a low water, marshy, muddy area near some emerging cattails. When we first saw them they were about 35 yards away with sun shining on them — we were facing toward the south from the road. We watched them for about two minutes before they took flight and flew to the south. We then drove to the next east-west road, which is 1 mile south of A40. . . . We found the two birds again on the south side of the gravel road. This time we watched them for about 15 minutes using binoculars and telescopes, and I took about 15 photos through my 1,000 mm C90 Celestron. The birds had extremely long red legs. The bills were black and about 1.5 times as long as the head. The bill was needle-like, very petite looking. The top of the head was black. The back of the long neck was black, the blackness extending into the breast a little in front of the bend of the wing. The back was black as were the upper and lower surfaces of the wings. The birds had a large white splotch above the eye and a small white line below the eye inside the black face. The front of the face and neck,

breast, belly, and under tail coverts were white. The upper tail and coverts were white, this whiteness extended about halfway up the back. The eye was black. I did not notice any color difference between the two birds. As we watched the two birds at the second location the male began doing a little dance next to the female while raising and lowering his head. He then got up on her back and copulated with her. They then raised their heads almost straight up and walked side by side for 5 to 10 steps. Before and after this behavior they were feeding actively by running about quite fast and agilely, catching insects on the emerging vegetation. They moved surprisingly fast for that long legged a bird. After watching the two birds for about 15 minutes from approximately 100 yards, they flew toward us and passed directly overhead to the north at about 30 or 40 feet. . . .

There are six previous undocumented reports of Black-necked Stilt from 1890, 1898, 1902, 1924, 1928, and 1954, and two unlabeled specimens from about 1900 (Dinsmore et al. 1984). The next record of this species was not until 1991, but it has been seen every year since except for 1995. The range of this species has been expanding since the 1960s (Kent and Dinsmore 1996).

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# Birding Areas in Cedar Rapids and Linn County

James Durbin

*Cedar Rapids and Linn County have several birding areas that are among the best in the state (Figure 1). Cedar Rapids with a population of over 100,000 is a leading manufacturing center and distribution point for the surrounding agricultural area. It is nestled on the banks of the Cedar River, which provides the wonderful Cedar River Green Belt containing many good birding sites. The Green Belt stretches from the nuclear plant north of Palo (northwest of Cedar Rapids) to the south side of Cedar Rapids.*

**Cedar Lake** in downtown Cedar Rapids has many water birds. It is reached by exiting from I-380 at the "H" and "J" Exit 21 and going west. The lake stays open all winter due to the power plant that uses the water for cooling. The lake is split into two parts with a channel between that runs west toward the river. The west end of the channel can be reached by taking the 7th Street Exit 20 from I-380 (going south) and when you come to the stop sign, veer to the right and drive beside Cargill on C Avenue. When you have to turn left onto 4th Street, veer to the right onto Stickle Street and cross the railroad tracks. Follow the street until you see the sign for the trail parking. This channel is open in the coldest part of the winter when other parts of the lake begin to freeze. Many species of ducks, grebes, and a Black-crowned Night-Heron have wintered there the past two years. The lake also will have Bald Eagles, Belted Kingfishers, sparrows, and various other birds depending on the season.

**Squaw Creek Regional Park** on the eastern edge of the city is reached from the east end of the Highway 100 extension (Marion Bypass) or from Highway 13 (1/4 mile) and then the bypass. The park is 663 acres with a drive, campground, and lodge. The drive makes a circle when you approach the lodge. As you drive in, you may see swallows, Ring-necked Pheasants, Eastern Bluebirds, and other grassland type birds. There is a small pond along the drive

where water birds such as the Little Blue Heron and American Bittern can be found. Continuing along the drive where it crosses the creeks, you may see flycatchers, Yellow Warblers, and American Goldfinches. Turn left and drive along the creek and you will see Bobolinks in the summer to the right in the field as well as other woodland and creek-edge birds. Park in the parking lots further along and walk the road taking frequent detours into the woods, open areas, and along the path that follows the creek and you will find many species of birds depending on the season. Field Sparrows, Blue-winged Warblers, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks nest in these areas. Continue along the road and stop at the various lots or along the road. The road will take you back to the lodge and you can start around again or continue to another birding area in Linn County.

**Willow Donnelly Park** is another small park that Joyce and I like to visit. It is along Boyson Road on the northeast edge of Cedar Rapids. Leave I-380 at Exit 25 and drive east along Boyson Road about a mile after crossing "C" Avenue. Turn right into the parking lot. There is a path that follows Dry Creek for about a mile with available side trips. Also, from the parking lot, walk across the grassy area parallel to Boyson Road to a bridge crossing the creek and continuing as a trail that you can follow along that side. After you walk down the trail for a couple hundred yards, there is a small wooded area on your right. We like to wander in this area to see thrushes and warblers in the spring and fall. We have found in this park most of the warblers and vireos that come through Iowa.

**Wickiup Hill Outdoor Learning Area (WHOLA)** is another area northwest of Cedar Rapids that is part of the Cedar River Green Belt, which stretches from the nuclear plant north of Palo to the south side of Cedar Rapids and includes many birding areas. WHOLA covers an area of about three miles beginning on the north side across from the nuclear power plant to Morris Hills Road on the south. To reach WHOLA, take Blairs Ferry Road (E36) from I-380 in Hiawatha and drive west. After traveling along two right angle curves, you will cross a creek and then turn right onto Featheridge Road (E34). Take Featheridge Road (E34) about 1.5 miles and turn left onto Morris Hills road. Travel 1.5 miles to the entrance. Park at the gate or in the parking lot across the road. The road into WHOLA is closed until the new education center is completed, hopefully by next year. At WHOLA, you will find a new shallow, marshy lake created by the Department of Transportation, oak savannahs, pot holes that dry up in late summer, marshy areas, and backwater ponds that are replen-



ished by the spring floods from the Cedar River. There also are open grassy areas. This park takes several hours to explore. Because of the varied habitat, you can see many different species of birds depending on the season.

The final place I would like to recommend is my **backyard!** I live at 1460 Douglas Court in Marion in Linn County. We have 132 species on our backyard list and 253 species on my list for Linn County. If you are interested in more information about Linn County or would like to go birding, butterflying, or odonating, contact me at [durbinjames@mcleodusa.net](mailto:durbinjames@mcleodusa.net) or call (319) 377-7194.

1460 Douglas Court, Marion, IA 52302-2308 ([durbinjames@mcleodusa.net](mailto:durbinjames@mcleodusa.net))

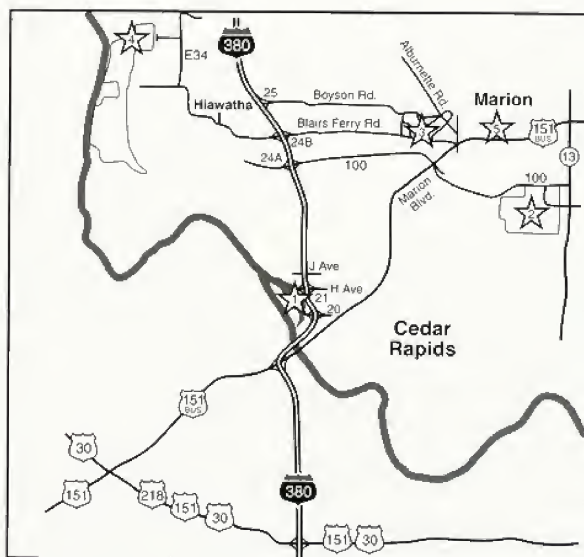


Figure 1. Location of birding areas in Cedar Rapids and Linn County: (1) Cedar Lake; (2) Squaw Creek Regional Park; (3) Willow Donnelly Park; (4) Wickiup Hill Outdoor Learning Area (WHOLA); (5) Durbin Yard.

# First Winter Record of Lark Bunting in Iowa

Bob Myers

*Our daughter and son-in-law left to drive home to Chicago in late morning on New Year's Day 2001 after a long weekend visit. I was going to settle in and look over David Sibley's new The Sibley Guide to Birds. A quick glance at my feeder station showed little activity except for one large sparrow-like bird that I first assumed was one of the several Harris Sparrows that had been coming to the feeders. The bird was partially hidden in a shrub, but it didn't appear quite right for a Harris Sparrow.*

Binoculars quickly showed that this bird had a streaked breast and a very prominent eye ring. Branches obscured a clear view. I was thinking this bird was much too big for a Song Sparrow; could it be a Vesper Sparrow? It seemed too big for that also and when it moved its head so I could see the bill, I dismissed Vesper Sparrow as a possibility. The bill was very heavy, pointed, and blue-gray in color. The head also showed a peaked crown, a white ear spot behind and just below the eye, a white mustache mark that circled around the cheek and back up the side of the head toward the ear spot, and a black edging around the base of the bill. I told my wife that whatever this was it was going to be good!

When the bird moved so I could see its wing, my mind finally started to work. A very buffy edging could be seen on each wing in the "shoulder" area formed by the greater and lesser secondary coverts (thanks, Sibley). I had already been thinking about birds with wing patches as I was unable to identify a bird with buffy wing patches seen very briefly on 22 December 2000 in this same location. (I now think the 22 December bird and this 1 January bird were the same bird.) With the combination of the other marks, the light finally went on in my brain as I opened the Sibley book to check out my Lark Bunting suspicion. I also have seen Lark Buntings in this plumage in

south Texas in February. This book and many others supported my identification of this bird as a basic plumaged Lark Bunting. I believe the bird was a male because of the black around the bill and was probably a first winter male because of the buffy rather than white wing patches.

Having made the identification, I asked my wife how many people she wanted at the house that day and started making phone calls. Gene and Eloise Armstrong and Maridel Jackson spent the afternoon waiting for the bird to reappear. It did not. As luck would have it, the bird returned about 15 minutes after they left. Gene and Eloise came back the next morning and the bird was most cooperative. I then placed the information on the Iowa Bird Line.

The Lark Bunting continued visiting our feeders (actually to the ground beneath them) regularly until 8 January 2001. I know of at least sixty birders who added it to their lists. As far as I know, this is the first winter record of a Lark Bunting in Iowa. There are a number of spring and summer records, especially from the very western border of the state.

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## **Ferruginous Hawk at Hitchcock Nature Area**

*Mark Orsag*

*I first saw the hawk from the Hitchcock Nature Area (HNA) lodge hawk-watching point at about noon on 20 December 2000. It approached from out of the Missouri River Valley to the west. Its wingbeats were tireless and, although it didn't seem to be moving fast, it covered an incredible distance very quickly. This approaching hawk pursued two wintering dark-morph Rough-legged Hawks and it successfully pirated prey (a small mammal of some sort) from one of the rough-legs. As*

*the dark-morph immature Ferruginous Hawk (which must have spotted the rough-legs from miles away) approached, the trailing smaller bird of the rough-leg pair dropped the prey. The Ferruginous Hawk powered ahead and seized the prey mid-air! It did not "go through" (i.e., move south) past the hawk-watch point at this time, but instead headed northeast out of sight.*

The second sighting occurred almost four hours later on the same day. In the interim, a powerful cold front had borne down on the lodge. I could see the winds increasing miles to the north and whipping the thick snow already on the ground into a blowing, drifting frenzy. When the front finally arrived, its howling winds triggered a small but diverse flight of hawks and eagles past the lodge. The Ferruginous Hawk was among them, and it glided overhead and flew south. Hitchcock rangers Darrin Jones and Darrel Orth had been notified by me of the first sighting of this rare raptor and had gone to look for it after finishing their ranger chores at HNA.

Twenty minutes after my second sighting (which they didn't know about at the time), they found the hawk north of Council Bluffs (about six miles to the south of Hitchcock). At this point, the bird perched briefly on an old sign, interacted aggressively with a wintering Red-tailed Hawk, and then flew away to the southwest (perhaps back into Nebraska?).

This was probably the most memorable raptor sighting for me during my time at HNA. This bird was a very large and long-winged, dark-morph buteo with pointed wings. It flew with stiff but powerful wingbeats (with a fairly shallow downstroke and a higher upstroke). The bird soared only briefly, but it did soar with a noticeable dihedral. The bird was very large, heavily-structured, and "bullet-shaped" in the air. It was seen gliding from both in front and below during the first two sightings and from the side during the third sighting. It glided with its wings held stiffly above the body during the first and third sightings. The wingtips did not droop. When seen high overhead during the second sighting, its wingtips were noted as being very strongly "swept back" for a buteo. Its power of flight was extraordinarily impressive and the bird seemed superbly adapted to an open-country environment. I also got the impression, more strongly than in the past, that the Ferruginous Hawk is a very "eagle-like" hawk!



A number of plumage features were also noted during the three sightings. On the dorsal surface, white patches were seen on the upper primaries. Tail and back were dark gray. The underside of the tail was white with a narrow, pale gray wash at the tip. An absolutely striking contrast between the dark grayish body and underwing coverts and the not-noticeably-barred or marked and very white (as opposed to silvery) flight feathers on the underside of the bird was noted during all three sightings. During the first sighting, as the bird flew head-on toward me, white patches were noticed on the leading edge of the bird's wings. These resembled the "headlight" markings of a light-morph Red-tailed Hawk. I have never, however, seen such markings on a dark-morph Red-tailed or Rough-legged Hawk. During the second sighting, as the bird glided by overhead, I noticed a contrast between the brownish color of the head and upper chest and the grayish color of the body and underwing coverts. I looked for the "white-comma" field mark, and I believe that I saw it. There certainly were white markings in the right area, but I was unable to make them out precisely due to "binocular shake" caused by high winds. When the bird perched during the third sighting, its dark head was noted, and the contrast between the brownish upper-chest and the gray back was seen.

I decided on the identification, and Darrel and Darrin concurred with it, on the basis of a combination of factors. Dark-morph *buteos* are tricky, but dark-morph Harlan's and Western Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawk characteristics didn't fit this *buteo*.

This bird's wings were very long, tapered, and noticeably pointed. Both the Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks have more rounded wings. Even with the primaries drawn in, their wing shapes are different. This bird's flight action did not resemble the fluid but compact (emphasis on the downbeat) action of a Red-tailed Hawk — nor did the downstroke appear to be centered at the wrist. The glide posture was also improbable for a Red-tailed Hawk. The structure of the Red-tailed Hawk is generally stockier and less rangy. The bird was noticeably larger and heavier than the two Rough-legged Hawks and the Red-tailed Hawk with which it interacted during the first two and the third sightings, respectively. While the Rough-legged Hawk's glide posture is similar to that of the Ferruginous Hawk, the wingbeats of the two species are different. The Rough-legged Hawk has a slow, measured, and fluid wingbeat. While the plumage of dark-morph immature Rough-legged Hawks can resemble immature

dark-morph Ferruginous Hawks from above, they are markedly different when the underside is visible. The dark/white contrast between the underwing coverts and the flight feathers and the barred secondaries, in particular, is less stark in the Rough-legged Hawk. This is true of dark-morph Red-tailed Hawks as well. Neither of these other two dark-morph buteos has white on the leading edge of the wings ("headlights") or on the underwing coverts in the "comma area." When perched, neither species has the noticeable brown upper-chest/gray back contrast seen by Darrin and Darrell. The gray wash or tail band at the tip of the tail's underside is probably more commonly associated with the Harlan's or Rough-legged Hawks, but can be shown by all three species. The band in question was both narrow and pale. The Rough-legged Hawk's tail band is usually wider; Harlan's Hawks' tails are highly variable. When the white tail with a dark tip pattern is present, however, the tail band is usually darker and better-defined. The white tail with a darker-tip pattern should also have been visible from above in a Harlan's Hawk.

A single light-morph Ferruginous Hawk was recorded in December 1999. A second probable sighting in November of that same year was recorded officially as an unidentified raptor — we just weren't sure. In late November 2001, Jerry Toll and Don Paseka (who had not been involved in the earlier records) found a bird that was entered into our records as the first adult Ferruginous Hawk seen at HNA (a record has been submitted to the IOU Records Committee). My belief is that a few individuals probably drift down the Missouri River Valley each year during the late fall/early winter. We'll continue to watch for them!

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# Book Review

*James J. Dinsmore*

Birds of Iowa Field Guide by *Stan Tekiela*. 2000.  
*Adventure Publications, Cambridge, Minnesota*. 276 pp.  
Softcover. \$12.95.

This small (4.5 by 6 inches) book covers 112 Iowa species. Rather than the usual taxonomic arrangement, the birds are placed into one of ten groups according to their predominant color (brown, blue, gray, etc.). For some species with strong sexual dimorphism (e.g., Baltimore Oriole, Northern Cardinal), both sexes are shown, each in its appropriate color group. Each species merits two pages, one with a full-color photo and the second with textual material including a description of the species (both sexes if they differ) and the juvenile; information on its nest, eggs, incubation, fledging, migration, food; and a comparison with a similar species. A final paragraph typically describes some aspects of the behavior or other interesting facts about the species. The distribution (year around, summer, winter, migration) in Iowa is given on a small state map (showing county outlines).

The author's credits indicate he has produced presumably similar guides for the birds of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Minnesota. I assume that much of the natural history information is generic and has been used in many or all of the above guides. However, the terminal paragraphs contain information unique to Iowa for a few species although the vast majority of information could have been used in all of the above guides.

The selection of species to be covered is reasonable although a few inclusions/exclusions deserve comment. For instance, Evening Grosbeak, a species that has essentially disappeared from Iowa for the past decade, is included as is Eurasian Tree Sparrow, an exotic species confined to a limited area in southeastern Iowa. The Eastern Meadowlark is included but not the Western Meadowlark. The only flycatchers included are Great Crested, Eastern Phoebe, and Eastern Kingbird and, among the thrushes, only American Robin and Eastern Bluebird are covered. Although Eastern Towhee, Dark-eyed Junco,

and six typical sparrows are included, Field Sparrow and all of the grassland sparrows (Savannah, Vesper, Grasshopper, etc.) are left out.

The photographs are generally quite good and in a few cases, very good. As expected with photographs, a few are very dark (Gray Catbird) or the bird is turned the wrong way (e.g., Lesser Yellowlegs). For both the Eastern Meadowlark and Dickcissel, I wish the bird would have turned slightly toward the photographer so that the distinctive breast markings could have been shown. Easily the poorest photo is of the darkest colored female Bobolink I have ever seen.

The range maps, which are credited to Anthony Hertz, Minnesota editor of *The Loon*, are generally accurate. However, 79 of the 112 are all of one color, that is the species is strictly a migrant, summer resident, etc. For the other 33 species that may be partial migrants or whatever, the maps are reasonably accurate. Both Hooded Merganser and Ring-billed Gull, however, have greater summer ranges than shown.

So how does this book stack up? In general, it is better than I expected. I suspect that many casual birders will find this book useful. The photos, while not matching up well with most of the field guides on the market, will still suffice to identify many of the common birds that Iowans will readily encounter. The range maps will help solidify some of these people's expectations of where and when to see various species. Likewise, many users of this guide will appreciate the added details on nesting, diet, and other facts on the species' biology. In short, I think it will find a reasonable market and will provide much useful information to many of the tens of thousands of Iowans who have a casual interest in birds. I know people for whom I would recommend this book. For \$13, it is not a bad deal.

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# **Fifty Years Ago in Iowa Bird Life**

*James J. Dinsmore*

*The December 1951 issue of Iowa Bird Life is a fairly thin 16 pages. The lead article on Least Bitterns at Swan Lake in Johnson County by Thomas H. Kent includes several great photographs of the birds at their nest. The author found 19 nests in the summer of 1951, and his article includes some valuable information on their breeding biology.*

An article by William Youngworth describes a birding trip to Kalsow Prairie in September 1951. At that time, the area had been a state preserve for only a few years so the birdlife was poorly known. Among the notes is one by editor Fred Pierce describing birds he saw on several hunting trips in fall 1951. (His mailbox probably had few submissions from others so he improvised as best he could.) Among the birds he saw were two Tundra Swans near Independence, the first he had ever seen. Although not a common species in Iowa, it seems incredible that a person, who had spent as much time in the field as Pierce did, had not seen that species previously.

Tucked into the middle of the journal is a loose sheet announcing the publication of *Birds of an Iowa Dooryard* by Althea Sherman. Published posthumously with editing by Fred Pierce, this book had been long awaited. As many members know, the book was reissued a few years ago by the University of Iowa Press.

Finally, the issue ended with a short note announcing that dues would go up in 1952, from \$1 to \$2! Editor Pierce hoped that members would accept that increase and continue to support the union.

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# Iowa Ornithologists' Union Spring 2001 Meeting and Board Meeting

5 May 2001

*The Iowa Ornithologists' Union business meeting was called to order at 4 P.M. at the Hotel Manning in Keosauqua, Iowa.*

**Approval of Minutes.** Reid Allen moved approval of the 23 September 2000 minutes. The motion was seconded by Hank Zaletel and passed.

**Treasurer's Report.** Rita Goranson provided the financial report. There was a balance of \$9,328.46, but the last printing bills were still out.

**Iowa Bird Life Editor's Report.** Kay Niyo gave a report on the last issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. She asked the membership to volunteer to write or suggest ideas for articles.

**President's Remarks.** President Mark Proescholdt thanked both Rita and Kay. He also thanked Dave Edwards for the new brochures and for his work on the database and getting publications mailed so efficiently.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Records Committee.** Ann Johnson reported that Bob Cecil has retired from the committee, and Paul Hertzell and Lee Schoenewe are joining the committee. The committee will be doing some of their work online.

Tom Kent reported that he will deposit his records, photos, and other material and the records of the Records Committee in the ISU Archives. He also gave a copy of the records to the State Historical Society in Iowa City, but those will be moved to Des Moines.

**Membership Committee.** Maridel Jackson has been reappointed to the committee.

**Publications Committee.** Hank Zaletel, Jim Dinsmore, and Bob Cecil have been added to the committee.

Dave Edwards catalogued the back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* that he has in stock. Iowa State University has a complete set and IOU has five additional sets on hand. Dave asked for recommendations on what to do with the back copies. Maridel moved that the board would decide. Charlie Winterwood seconded the motion and it was passed.

**Library/Historical Committee.** Hank Zaletel reported that ISU acquired the Walter Rosene collection. Mr. Rosene was the first president of IOU and kept Boone County checklists from 1931–1941. Hank said he will write an article for the newsletter.

#### ADDITIONAL REPORTS

**Birdline.** Jim Fuller wants to retire from operating the IOU Birdline. Mark has talked with a number of people but none have agreed so far to take Jim's place. He will continue to search for a replacement.

**Web Page.** Ann Johnson reported there are 200 addresses on the IA-BIRD listserv. She thinks she might be able to track new memberships and purchases on the web page. The Rare Bird Alert (RBA) is the most popular page. Mark suggested dropping the telephone RBA as some other states have done. The numbers of callers was discussed.

**Education Booklets.** Linda Zaletel attended a meeting in Tucson and sold quite a few booklets. A meeting will be held in the Des Moines area in the fall for naturalists, and 1,400 people are expected.

**Spring Bird Count.** There was a reminder to record the number of species and how many of each species found for the Spring Bird Count.

**Fall Field Reports.** Paul Hertzel has agreed to become fall field reports editor following Jim Fuller's retirement. Hank asked about including field reports taken from the Internet. Mark said he thinks it should be a decision of the field editor.

**Fall IOU Meeting.** Rob Thelen offered to host the fall IOU meeting at Carroll on 7–9 September 2001. Hank so moved and Pam Allen seconded. The motion passed.

**Joint IOU/Audubon Iowa Meeting** Paul Zeph of Iowa Audubon wrote Mark about the possibility of holding a joint fall meeting in 2002 in Central Iowa.

**Elections.** The Nominating Committee of Ann Johnson (chair), Jim Fuller, and Ann Barker presented a slate of officers: Phil Walsh, president; Tom Johnson, vice president; Sharon Stilwell, Dick Tetrault, and Linda Zaletel, board members. Mark asked for additional nominations from the floor. Hearing none, he asked that the members vote affirmatively for the slate as presented. They did so. He thanked outgoing board members, chairs, and officers, Maridel Jackson, Curt Nelson, Phil Walsh, and Tom Johnson, for serving.

#### OLD BUSINESS

**Publications Committee.** Nominations for the committee were approved: Bob Cecil, Jim Dinsmore, and Hank Zaletel.

**Membership Committee.** Carol Berrrier's term on the committee has expired and Maridel Jackson has been reappointed.

**Budget.** Regarding the budget, the price of printing *Iowa Bird Life* has increased. Mark suggested a letter be included in the newsletter requesting donations.

**Important Bird Areas.** Jane Clark, Jim Dinsmore, and Ric Zarwell explained the Important Birds Areas (IBA) project. The IBA committee, organized by Iowa Audubon and chaired by Jim Dinsmore, is setting up the criteria and will soon be sending out requests for nominations of areas to be included in the IBAs. Ric Zarwell has been doing fund-raising and grant-writing to support the project. Jane expressed hope that IOU would be able to support this project with some funding.

**Appreciation.** Pam Allen thanked Mark Proescholdt for so ably serving as president. Jim Dinsmore thanked Hank and Linda Zaletel for their long service as newsletter editors. Mark Proescholdt thanked Bob Cecil for organizing the spring IOU meeting in Keosauqua. The membership responded with applause for all.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mel Moe invited IOU to the Kellerton Bird Conservation Area dedication. Ric Zarwell discussed the Great River Birding Trail. Jane announced that Doug Harr has transferred to the Wildlife Diversity Program of DNR.

Hank Zaletel moved and Pam Allen seconded the motion to adjourn at 4:55 p.m. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Jane R. Clark, secretary



#### IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION BOARD MEETING

The board of the IOU met on 5 May 2001 following the meeting of the membership. Present were Mark Proescholdt (president), Jane Clark (secretary), Dave Edwards, Judy Garton, Rita Goranson, Tom Johnson, Kay Niyo, Sharon Stilwell, Richard Tetrault, and Linda Zaletel.

Dave Edwards suggested sending a checklist to all new members.

Rita Goranson stated that we need to decide what to do with two certificates of deposit that are due 30 June 2001.

There was discussion about what to charge for the back copies of *Iowa Bird Life*. A motion was made and seconded by Tom Kent and Rita Goranson, respectively, and passed to approve the following fees for back copies:

*Last five years:* \$3 each for most recent year; \$2 each for prior four years;

*All prior years:* \$3 per year; \$12 for five years; \$20 for 10 years; and

*Individual issues:* \$0.75 for one issue, \$0.60 for additional issues in an order of 5 years or more, \$0.50 for additional issues in an order of 10 years or more.

Mark asked Kay about the *Iowa Bird Life* expenses that she has investigated. Kay edits articles, sends edited versions to the authors, and makes author changes. She then sends articles, graphs, photos, etc. to Lynn Ekblad who formats it in PageMaker. Lynn sends a portable document format (PDF) file galley proof to Kay as an email attachment. Kay emails the PDF galley to all authors for minor corrections, which she then over night mails to Lynn. Lynn emails the corrected PDF file to Kay for proofing. Kay authorizes Lynn to send the electronic file to a printer (one of three) who has previously submitted the lowest bid to Kay. Kay receives a proof by overnight mail from the printer, proofs it, and returns it by overnight mail to the printer. Kay has asked the printers how to save money on the printing. Paper is not the highest cost. A cover in black and white would save about \$150/issue. Decreasing the number of pages and the layout are the areas where the most could be saved. Kay suggested forming an IOU fund-raising or development committee to discuss ideas. Mark suggested one possibility was to increase dues, but said he wasn't in favor of doing so. Ads for the newsletter were also suggested. Mark and Rita discussed funds that are tied up.

Jane brought up the idea of a contribution to the Important Bird Areas project. The consensus was to wait.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P.M. Respectfully submitted, Jane R. Clark, secretary.

# Iowa Ornithologists' Union Fall 2001 Meeting and Board Meeting

8 September 2001

*The Iowa Ornithologists' Union business meeting was held at Swan Lake State Park, Iowa. President Phil Walsh called the business meeting to order, following programs by Kay Newman and Don Poggensee.*

**Treasurer's Report.** Rita Goranson read the report.

**Records Committee.** Ann Johnson reported that the committee has nearly completed Year 2000 records and will be reviewing the checklist and suggesting changes in species status. A question was raised about printing new checklists. Maridel Jackson stated that we have many of the 1999 lists on hand.

**Birdline.** Pete Ernzen has volunteered to take over the Birdline after Jim Fuller's retirement. Appreciation was expressed to Pete.

**Website.** Ann is going to redesign the site to give it a new look and to make it more compatible for the business of the IOU. It is possible that committees could also do their work on the site in a "secure" area. She asked for ideas. The question about doing field reports on the web was raised. Maridel reported that Breeding Bird Surveys have been online for about three years.

There were no other committee reports.

## NEW BUSINESS

**State Wildlife Funding** Dave Hurd discussed the REAP license plate and compared it to the Texas plate where their annual fee is higher. He thought we might lose some percentage of renewals, but said it would bring in more money. Tom Johnson asked how REAP dollars are used. Linda Zaletel discussed some of the conservation education projects that are funded by REAP. Mark Proescholdt asked how the Wildlife Diversity Program is funded and wondered about

CARA, which is being considered at the federal level. A general discussion followed about funding for wildlife.

**Tim Schantz Memorial Scholarship Fund.** Ann informed the membership that Tim Schantz's parents would be attending the dinner, and she discussed how Tim's scholarship fund would be set up. Proceeds from an annuity would pay for transportation and expenses to send a student to a shorebird festival in Alaska. Ann asked if we should have a committee to prescreen applicants for the scholarship.

**Big Year on a Budget.** Phil Walsh has appointed Eugene and Eloise Armstrong to put together four or five field trips in 2002. Phil asked the Armstrongs to think about where and when they would go if they were trying to see as many species in the state as possible in a limited amount of time. All levels of birders are invited and encouraged to participate. Many members voiced enthusiasm for the idea. Watch the newsletter and/or the e-mail listserv for additional details.

**Membership and Budget.** Phil Walsh reported on expenses of the organization. He gathered data for the last 20 years and prepared computer spreadsheets to show how membership has changed and how dues, contributions, etc. have been spent. Phil noted that the yearly costs for publishing the journal remained more or less constant for 20 years, but those costs have risen dramatically due to changes in the method of printing. He also noted that the journal and newsletter are excellent publications, and they are the only contact many of our members have with the IOU. Ann Johnson and Dave Edwards are going to be evaluating how many members are recruited through the web page. New brochures will be produced. Linda Zaletel suggested we need a media packet. Phil suggested that the Membership Committee could be considering some of these ideas.

**Spring Meeting.** Tom Johnson announced that we need a spring meeting site. Mark Proescholdt suggested Ottumwa would be a good location. Tom will check with Darleen Ayres in Ottumwa.

Meeting adjourned. Minutes respectfully submitted by Jane R. Clark, secretary.

#### IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of the IOU met on 8 September 2001 following the meeting of the membership. Present were Phil Walsh (president), Jane Clark (secretary), Judy Garton, Tom Johnson, Sharon Stilwell, Richard Tetrault, and Linda Zaletel.

Linda Zaletel moved approval of the May board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Sharon Stilwell and passed.

There was a discussion about the budget including costs of the *Iowa Bird Life* journal and newsletter. Linda stated that she would like a breakdown of expenses before decisions are made.

The board members discussed membership and the budget. Sharon suggested we have regional meetings to help members become acquainted. Dick Tetrault suggested we could raise money to cover the costs of *Iowa Bird Life*. Dick also feels that people interacting with other people is the key to increasing membership. Other suggestions included gift memberships, attending other organizations' meetings, gifts in memory, ads in the newsletter, donations, etc. Linda expressed a concern about the possibility of being audited. It should be a priority to straighten out the books, have daily/monthly expense breakdowns, and have funds designated for appropriate uses. It was suggested we place a survey in the newsletter to determine member interests and willingness to contribute to special projects.

An Ad Hoc Media Committee was appointed with Linda as the chair. The committee should have a report by the next meeting.

It also was suggested that a discussion of REAP be included in the next newsletter.

The meeting was adjourned. Minutes respectfully submitted by Jane R. Clark, secretary.





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## MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Institutions may subscribe to *Iowa Bird Life* for \$20 per year. Individuals may join the Iowa Ornithologists' Union according to the following membership classes: Regular (\$20); Regular as spouse or minor child of another Regular member (without publications) (\$4 first additional family member, \$2 each additional family member); Contributing (\$20 plus any additional tax-deductible contribution to the IOU); and Life (\$500 as single payment or \$125 for each of four years). Members also will receive the quarterly *IOU News* and are eligible to vote and hold office in the Union. Send subscriptions, membership payments, or address changes to David C. Edwards, 2308 State Avenue, Ames, IA 50014 (dcejce@qwest.net).

## INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the winter issue, 15 February for the spring issue, 15 May for the summer issue, and 15 July for the fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. Manuscripts may be submitted on computer disk (preferably Microsoft Word or WordPerfect for PCs) or sent as an e-mail attachment to the editor. Please submit one printed copy of the manuscript if sending a disk. Alternatively, material can be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, contact the editor.

## MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* are available. For an order form, send a self-addressed envelope to *Iowa Bird Life*, 2308 State Avenue, Ames, IA 50014 (dcejce@qwest.net).

*Field Checklist of Iowa Birds*, 1999 Edition: 5 for \$1.50, postpaid, and other IOU materials are available from Maridel Jackson, 410 S.W. Westview Drive, Ankeny, IA 50021 (mpwj@gateway.net). Also available at annual meetings.



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#### OFFICERS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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#### UPCOMING MEETINGS OF IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Spring 2002, 26–28 April, Ottumwa, IA

#### FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the field reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to Kayleen A. Niyo, 25100 Sunset Lane, Evergreen, CO 80439, Kay@KayNiyo.com). An article describing the reporting process also is available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

**Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb) — 3 March** (Robert I. Cecil, 1315 41st Street, Des Moines, IA 50311, wewarb@aol.com)

**Spring (Mar, Apr, May) — 3 June** (Matthew C. Kenne, 709 N. Phillips, Algona, IA 50511, meeckeckk@rconnect.com)

**Summer (Jun, Jul) — 3 August** (James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames, IA 50014, oldcoot@iastate.edu)

**Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov) — 3 December** (Paul Hertzell, 240 12th Street, S.E., Mason City, IA 51401-5836, phertzell@rconnect.com)



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### CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions, write Aaron Brees, Christmas Bird Count Editor, 509 S. West Street, Corydon, IA 50060 (abrees@hotmail.com).

IOWA BIRDLINE: (712) 364-2863 (pkernzen@pionet.net)

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Peter Ernzen checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

IOU HOMEPAGE: <http://www.iowabirds.org>

### IOU NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editor, Paul Hertzel, 240 12th Street, S.E., Mason City, IA 51401-5836 (phertzel@rconnect.com)

### REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005 (lpdlfrd@juno.com). Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa. The Nebraska Bird Line, available 24 hours a day, is (402) 292-5325. Iowa birders are encouraged to report their Nebraska sightings to this number.

### ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send address changes/corrections to David C. Edwards, 2308 State Avenue, Ames, IA 50014 (dcejce@qwest.net)



